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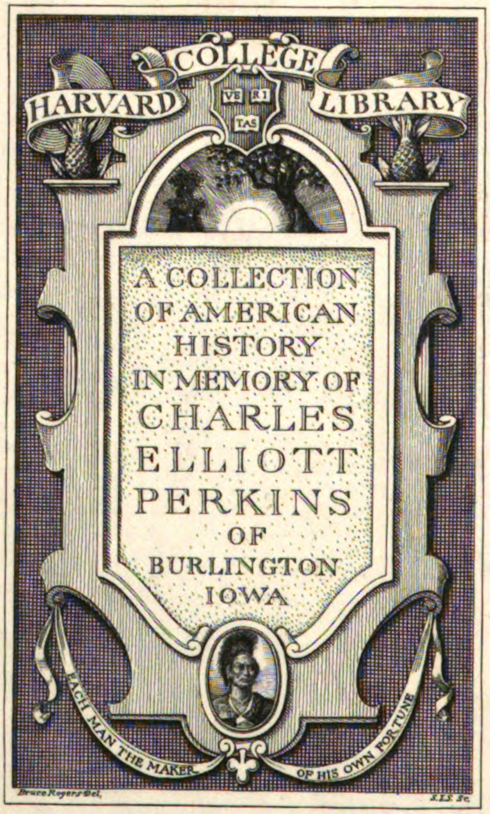

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# ME-WON-I-TOC.

## A TALE OF FRONTIER LIFE

AND

## INDIAN CHARACTER;

EXHIBITING TRADITIONS, SUPERSTITIONS, AND CHARACTER
OF A RACE THAT IS PASSING AWAY.

6/78

## A Romance of the Frontier.

BY SOLON ROBINSON.

"Those who never lived in the wilderness can have but a faint idea of the many romantic incidents met with by the pioneers."

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NEW YORK NEWS COMPANY,
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# ME-WON-I-TOC.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE OPENING SCENE OF A WILD DRAMA—THE CHARACTERS APPEAR IN THE LIGHT OF A PRAIRIE FIRE.

Thirty years ago—“ Dear me, that was before I was born. I don't want to read about anything so long ago. Besides, what a queer way to begin a story.”

That is an expression that will burst from more than one pretty mouth. The author is sorry to say that in more than one case it will not be spoken so much in objection to the age of events, as it will truly reassure some one then present, that the speaker is not yet past that particular year. I fear that in a few instances the assertion will have to be taken with an allowance of about five years.

No matter. It was thirty years ago this present month of November, 1864, that—

“Oh, how well I remember that month. It was the date of my marriage. Thirty years of uninterrupted——.”

She would have said “ bliss,” but the word stuck in her throat. I hope, ladies, thirty years hence, it will not stick in yours. But who can tell what thirty years will bring about? Great changes have occurred since the lady who just spoke, as she glanced at the opening words of this chapter, took the step that she anticipated would bring her “ uninterrupted bliss.”

“Thirty years—November, 1834,”—another lady is musing over that date. She is still a beautiful woman, notwithstanding the fact we learn when she speaks out her musing. “ Why, that was when my Charles was born. It was the year we moved to the West. Oh how long it does seem. Chicago was then a little frontier Indian village. It was several years later than that period, a great place of gathering of the Pottowottomie tribes to receive their annual payments of money and blankets and calicoes. Dear, dear me, what scenes of savage debauchery. It does seem as though it *must* be more than thirty years ago. Why Charles has been dead almost—well I don't know how long. Do tell me, somebody, how long it is since the battle of Fort Donelson, when my dear boy and his father were both killed by the same ball. It does seem so long, and yet it can't be thirty years, for that's exactly the time since Charles was born.”

“ Well, well, I wonder what this man is going to say about that year.”

“ And so do I; but I guess we never shall, if people keep breaking in and interrupting him about their age, and when they were married, and when they moved out West, and when the oldest son was born, and all that. For my part I want to know what he is going to say about ‘ thirty years ago,’ and something about that singular Indian name, and what it means?”

That is exactly what I was going to tell you, but in using those three first words, I found that I had heard just such expressions about the “ queer way” I have taken to commence this “romance of history.” Perhaps it is a queer way to begin a story; it is my way; and you will find in it some queer things, quite unlike any you ever read before. Strange events which I believe actually occurred, for I learned them from a race of people not given to romance, though extremely fond of story-telling, with which they beguile the hours of long Winter evenings, just as civilized people do with books, magazines and daily papers.

How many, many hours I have sat in an Indian wigwam, listening to some good story-teller, and occasionally I have undertaken his office myself. I wish I could be assured that I shall give half as much satisfaction in my present office of story-teller to a different auditory. But there is a vast difference between now and then, as well as between the audiences. That was composed of men whose fashionable attire consisted of a blanket, calico shirt, kilt, and buckskin moccasins and leggins. The dress of the ladies was ditto exactly, with the addition of a skirt, fearfully narrow for the present fashion, made of a piece of blue broadcloth, the wide listing forming the ornamental band around the lower edge, which came about half way between the ankle and the next flexible joint. It did not require much to dress one of my lady listeners. Nature furnished the entire head-dress, gloves and hose. And Nature also furnished them, as I hope it will many of their white sisters, with a great fondness for my stories. I hope now I shall have as attentive readers as I then had listeners for those that I heard or told “ thirty years ago.”

Alas! I am aware that in one thing I may fail. I am not now the same easy, fluent talker I was then. I fear you will say, I am “ old enough to be garrulous.” Perhaps you will say, “ prolix,” if I make a longer preface. So here it ends.

It was in the afternoon of the 7th day of November, 1834, just as the sun was tipping with gold the tree-tops along the eastern edge of one of the beautiful prairies that are scattered around the head of Lake Michigan, that I emerged from the “ the thick timber,” and stood in the full sunlight, looking upon one of the grandest scenes in nature—grander, indeed, than the ocean. That we expect to see vast and awful, particularly in a storm that lashes its waters upon the shore until the very firmest rocks tremble, and sometimes give way to the power and fury of the mighty waves.

In the ocean, particularly when you visit it for the first time, you expect grandeur. You may even be disappointed, if it is calm, in seeing it less grand than you expected. Fancy pictures the sea as something vast, magnificent, beautiful. It is far different with the prairies. Imagination rarely delineates them aright. There is no shore to stand upon and feel the waves beat till you tremble. Yet no sensible being ever stood for the first time viewing one of these boundless oceans of grass, without feeling awe—without thinking how vast is inanimate nature; how small a creature is man!

A prairie that stretches away before you, far beyond where the horizon shuts down upon the earth, shows upon that man, or his habitation, is but a small speck—a mere atom of dust upon the imaginary area of a single acre.

You have heard of “ God's acre.” I stood upon God's acre in a literal sense. A vast, incomprehensible, eternal, and for long ages an unchangeable acre, fenced around by the sky, except at one or two points, where the tops of trees and fleecy clouds were mingled together to form the outline of the great expanse before me.

I do not wonder that that the first French explorer called this "La Grande Prairie."

It is indeed grand. It reaches from Lake Michigan, almost to the Ohio River on the south and the Mississippi on the west, interspersed here and there with islands of forest trees amid the ocean of grass.

I had before seen prairies, but where trees were visible in all directions. I had never before seen one so worthy the name of "grand."

My traveling companion was a young Englishman, by name Bartolf, to whom every scene was new and wonderful. We had been riding all day through dark and dreary woodland, guided by an Indian trail, or marks upon trees, which led to the best places to ford the streams some of which were like the "Slough of Despond."

Our requirements for the night were very simple; wood, water and grass. This was the travelers' fare in that region "thirty years ago."

There are houses all around that prairie now, and in them book-cases and center tables, upon which are pictorial magazines and fashion plates; though none of them represent the costume that I have described as in fashion in that locality "thirty years ago."

The sun might have been an hour high, when we two travelers emerged into its effulgence. I only know that it was effulgent; I took no other note of time.

The sunlight fell upon a sea of grass, sere and yellow as the leaves of Autumn. It stirred lightly in the breeze, and flashed in golden rays across the great prairie, painting a picture that would ravish unaccustomed eyes.

A scene still more enchanting might have been seen from the same position a few hours later. We saw it from another point; and I wish I could give you a view of its bright, glowing beauty. But first, let us reach our lodging place. That was at the edge of a grove of timber, some seven miles westward, known to the Indian traders and a few travelers as Me-won-i-toc's Village, though since the village had disappeared. it was better known as Me-won-i-toc's Point. There we expected to find the three requirements of travelers. So we made but a short stay where we struck the prairie; only long enough to admire its beauty. Our horses would have been glad to stop there, for they were hungry and tired. But there were only two of the requisites; the third and most important was lacking. There was no water. So we toiled on.

Perhaps some who read this story will be struck with the Providence that led us to push forward to the place we camped at upon that particular night, as we found good camping ground before we reached that spot, which we did not do until after dusk.

It was too late to observe what I often saw afterward, the great beauty of this location. We pitched our tent and built our camp-fire upon one branch of the little stream that gathers here from several springs, and a natural water-shed of considerable area, by which a respectable-sized mill-stream is formed, a mile or two lower down.

As it was a warm evening we only needed wood enough to make a small fire for our coffee, and to give our camp a cheerful look; and while one gathered fuel and started a fire the other stripped the horses, which were of the breed known as Indian ponies and accustomed to such life, for their former masters never lay up Winter stores.

The ponies were turned loose without hesitation, as they consider the camp their home. Beside, the only green grass was along the creek banks, which would limit their range.

I did not then know that just such a warm sunny day in November may be followed by a night of most fearful storm of snow, in which man and beast perished. Perhaps if I had, we should not have laid down so unceremoniously as we did upon our bed of dry grass, under our little shelter tent.

If some of my lady readers could have looked into that camp, how they would have been amused to see us boiling our coffee-pot upon those stones, with little blazing sticks continually renewed. We needed all the coals that we could make, to broil some slices of bacon, which we did by sticking them upon hazel wands and holding them in the fire. We toasted our bread in the same way, and lubricated it with the fat of the bacon. Plates and napkins were alike made of wisps of grass twisted together. There were no dishes to wash. The coffee-pot, camp-kettle and two tin cups comprised the entire lot.

Yet, I assure you, ladies, no supper ever set out within marble walls, was eaten with a better relish, nor was a couch ever enjoyed more than ours for the first half of the night, lying as we did under our cotton roof, with our saddles for pillows, and each a blanket for covering.

I said the first half of the night. Indeed, it was hardly twelve when we awoke, to sleep no more. I must tell you why.

After our little fire had burned low, the camp and all its surroundings became very dark, as a haze spread over the stars. I told my companion that it was smoke—that the prairie was burning at the south of us, and that he might see one of the grandest sights, before morning, ever witnessed by man.

We hoped, yes, longed for the opportunity ardently of seeing for the first time a prairie on fire. The sight would not be quite so fresh now. That was "thirty years ago."

I was not disappointed. I wakened a little before midnight to see the heavens all aglow with occasional flashes like those of the aurora borealis. But these came from the South. No fire was yet visible, because we lay in a valley, with a considerable ridge between us and the fire. North of us the ground rose gently, and the light fell upon it in such a manner that every object stood out distinctly visible. I shall never forget that scene.

We had pitched our camp just upon the edge of that part of the old Indian village which had been used for ages as their cemetery. The living and the dead usually abide in close proximity. Lighted now, as it was, by the glow of a distant and unseen fire, the view produced a weird impression. There were a few great, gnarly old burr-oaks still bearing live branches, but there were more trunks that had been killed by fire at the roots, and stood until the bark and all the small limbs had fallen off, leaving the body and large branches almost white, and some of them of curious formation. Beneath these were the remains of two or three scaffolds, which had contained bodies that were given that mode of sepulture. A dozen or more graves were marked by the common "emblem of life in the spirit land," a small white flag, fluttering from a staff ten or fifteen feet high. These flags are often renewed by those who come to visit the dead, and they are sometimes kept alive so long that there remains no other mark of the grave. When seen as these were in the wilderness, they give a peculiar solemnity to the place. I have never looked upon a resting-place of the dead with stronger feelings of solemnity, respect and almost adoration, than I did upon the one I have faintly described. Perhaps the manner in which it burst upon my view by such a light, at such a time, when just wakening from sleep at midnight, had something to do with the impression that it made upon my mind. Perhaps the scene that followed tended to fix the impression more indelibly.

However, before I attempt to describe what further I saw in that ancient cemetery of a "race that is passing away," I shall try to give you a view of another, and to me most interesting scene, and that is

### A BURNING PRAIRIE.

In the first place, do not imagine a prairie a level plain. The one we were now encamped upon was so rolling that some of the time, when one pressed forward faster than the other, at only half a mile distant, he was lost to view.

It is exceedingly toilsome to ride one of these small, slow-gaited Indian ponies over such a prairie, for we can hardly urge them out of a walk, although we often feel, as we reach the crest of a ridge, that we should like to dash down the slope at race-horse speed in pursuit of a wolf or deer that opens to view just ahead.

A level prairie is apt to be marshy, or at least wet. That stretching off south of Chicago, for example. Upon marshes and along creeks, upon rich overflowable lands, the growth of grass is very heavy, and when dry and burning in a high wind, makes a fire that no one can resist. Travelers overtaken in such a place may lose their lives; they sometimes have lost teams and wagons. Upon the dry land the grass is short and burns with a blaze so low that one can step, ride or drive over it without danger, unless the wind is raging. Upon the dryest prairie there are small marshes and little valleys where the grass grows rank, and these shoot up a great flame out of the general quiet little blaze of the short grass, which resembles the burning of forest leaves, or stubble of a grain field.

In a calm or light wind, a burning prairie is simply grand. In a strong wind it is both grand and terrific.

Such was the first great fire that I saw. With it came the wind. It was the smoke that had obscured the stars.

You may depend upon it, we were not long awake before we were upon our feet. The fire at this time was some three miles away, just coming over the crest of a long ridge, parallel to its course. Within ten minutes the whole ridge, perhaps ten miles in length, was ablaze. The blaze then resembled a red-hot chain, waved by some invisible power.

"The wind is rising," I said to Bartolf, "and we shall now see wonderful sights."

My first impression was of our danger; until he called my attention to the fact that the Indians had burnt off a strip all along upon the other side of the creek, to prevent the fire when it should come, from sweeping over the place held sacred to the departed. So we were entirely safe. If we had encamped at the spot we passed a few miles back, which was almost surrounded with marshes, we should have been enveloped with fire.

How thankful I was at that moment for the Providence that had brought us here. I was still more so afterward, for it gave me the first introduction to characters that I shall by-and-by introduce to my readers.

The "sights" promised my fellow traveler soon began to be visible.

At first great flocks of birds, flying away to the woods for safety. Then came a troop of prairie wolves, and these were followed by a herd of deer. They could not, as travelers, and dwellers upon the prairie often do, guard themselves against the approaching terror by fighting fire with fire, or by beating it out with bushes, boards, brooms, or with a spade and fresh earth. It would have been hard to stop the long chain now sweeping down the slope toward us, for the wind would lift up sections of it and carry it forward perhaps half a mile faster than a horse could run, leaving the forward part at a point, and then go back and bring up another section, so that the beautiful chain soon became a jagged, serrated line that was indeed a "sight."

It was not equal, however, to the one that met our eyes about an hour after we first saw the light on the prairie.

Our attention was first called from the fire by a peculiar snort of the ponies, which I had noticed that they always gave when they discovered an Indian. Turning suddenly, I saw them looking intently toward the grove. I knew there was no cause for alarm, for the Pottowottomies were entirely friendly I supposed that some of them had encamped there and, like us, were astir at the approach of the fire. The light was shining strong upon the tall white sentinels, the old trees, and the wind blowing fresh, made the little spirit flags flutter and flash in the light and wind in a way that naturally tended to set the mind wandering in dream-land. I could easily fancy the grim old savages of "thirty years ago" getting up from their cold beds to warm themselves in this great conflagration.

As I stood gazing at the old oaks, and only partially glancing at the ground, and indulging in a reverie that repeopled the deserted village with old and young warriors, hunters, and youth, at their rude games, and sports of Indian life, such as wrestling, jumping, running and dancing, or marching in solemn array around a grave, what was my horror to see, or think that I saw, the very realization of my imaginings.

Our horses had not been mistaken. Living or dead, the Indians were there, moving out of the bushes into the light of the burning prairie, and marching in slow and silent procession at that midnight hour through that solemn place.

It certainly was the most impressive funeral ceremony that I have ever witnessed. I observed that each one of the company carried a dry bone, and after marching three times around a certain grave, deposited the bone upon a pile of fuel already prepared over the spot where the sleeper, whoever he might be, had long been at rest.

During our ride that day, and during many subsequent ones, I had observed the frequent recurrence of such bones, which I decided, upon examination, were those of the buffalo, and I wondered what remarkable cause had destroyed so many of these animals and left their bones all these long years bleaching in the sun, wind and rain. I began to learn the cause this night, and learned it shortly afterward from some of the strange beings that I saw for the first time in that startling, ghostly procession.

That ceremony was in annual commemoration of the event that destroyed such vast numbers of the buffalo when they were as common around Lake Michigan as they are now upon the head waters of the Nebraska.

When this mysterious, silent march was completed, and each one of the company had soberly deposited his bone, which must have been gathered by him or her from the spot where the animal had died, a venerable old warrior knelt down by the pile and with his flint and steel struck fire and set the fuel blazing, and then with voices, and tin kettles, and horns, such a din of noises commenced as would have most effectually awakened us if we had not been previously aroused by the fire on the prairie, which had by this time approached so near that its light, and smoke, and roaring noise added greatly to the effect of this remarkable midnight pow-wow.

At first I felt as though no white man should intrude upon the solemnity of these superstitious people; but as the noise increased, I felt inclined to have a nearer view. It was another providential circumstance, as I afterward learned, for the tradition was that this ceremony must be continued until a white man should come during its performance and voluntarily offer to the old chief powder and ball to shoot the spirit buffalo, and until that was done, none of the tribe could hope to kill another.

It was almost hoping against hope that a white man should happen here, so far away from white settlements, at the critical time of this midnight ceremony, and should think to make the proffer of the long hoped-for article.

It was hoped for this year more than ever, for by a treaty which some of the tribe had been compelled to make, by the pressure of the advance of civilization, the whole were soon to be removed West of the Mississippi, almost into the buffalo country, and it was of the greatest importance that the spell should be broken.

Yet, how could this be expected now, although white men were present, for the principal actor was not to speak a word during the whole ceremony to indicate his wishes.

At the proper moment in the proceedings, a young man handed the chief his rifle, enjoining him "by the love of all his people to get a good sight and fire with steady aim, that they might once more have success in hunting."

The old man obeyed, and sent the ball into the fire among the burning bones. His shot was followed with a look of despair. He had not brought down the game. By that time I had approached within a few feet, and at the first sight of that despairing face I stepped forward by a sort of impulse that I cannot account for; but it seemed to me as though there was a reality in the scene—that he had missed the animal, and was in need of some friendly hand with another gun, as he had no time to reload his own. It was scarcely ten seconds from the time he fired his first shot before I had taken the empty piece in mine and placed my loaded one in his hands; and it was not ten seconds more before the charge had followed the first, and then there arose such a shout of joy as I had never heard before, nor ever have felt come so directly from the heart at any time since.

At first, I thought it was on account of the mere effect of the shot; my gun being double-barreled and heavily loaded, he had pulled both triggers at once, with the muzzle pretty close to the fire, and the consequence was that it was blown out of all its solemnity of a funeral ceremony. It certainly was a killing shot, and must have dropped the spirit buffalo on the instant, and pretty deep into the earth, as very few of its remains were to be seen.

The young men shouted, the women screamed, the old man looked happy, and as he gave me my gun he threw up his hands above my head, and called me "wyonet chemokomon," and other endearing terms of friendship, that indicated that he thought me the best friend that his people had on earth.

This at the time, was all mystery to me. Indeed, the events of this night had a sort of intoxicating effect upon my senses, and I began to doubt whether I was yet awake, or whether I was still dreaming in our little camp down by the brook. My companion was more amazed than myself. I was better acquainted with Indian character, and even then could speak a little of the language of this tribe, and determined that I would learn enough of it to unravel this mystery. I did so, and now, gentle reader, having told you how I learned the history of him who sleeps in this grave, if you will sit down with me by our camp fire, upon the very spot where he had lived and practiced his arts, I will tell the story to you, in substance, as I heard it. Remember, it is not mine, but an old Indian's tale of events connected with his own life, enacted in this old Me-won-i-toc's village.

The relator is known among his own people by the name of Sho-bon-ya (Shobonier), and also as Sho-val-ya (Chevalier.) It was he to whom I loaned my gun who conducted the ceremony of shooting "the spirit buffalo." He is a noble looking, aged chieftain, with a fine, pleasant countenance, tall, erect form, and "thirty years ago" he walked with an elastic step, although his scattered gray locks indicated that he had seen many years. The hair of his squaw was still whiter. His family consisted of himself and wife, two sons and their wives and children, one son-in-law and children, beside others of various degrees of affinity. One of Shobonier's brothers, Neo-mock-i-taw, was a very powerfully built man, six feet four inches high, who looked as though he could strike a man dead at a blow—and so he afterward did, one of his cousins, known as "Old Spot," because he had a white spot on his head, about an inch across, of perfectly white hair, in a setting of raven black. This mark, it was said, came from a spent rifle ball, at the battle of Tippecanoe, which had only force enough to bruise the flesh, without penetrating his hard skull. This Indian was a drunken one, and when in liquor was, like many white men, quarrelsome, and that was the cause of his death at the hands of his cousin, who was generally sober and extremely good-natured: and so was Spot, when sober, and that was when he could not get any "good-na-tos."

"Old Spot" was a "lone Indian," with neither wife, children, brothers, sisters, or near relatives, to claim blood money of his slayer, and so he escaped the usual penalty.

The name of the son-in-law was Me-shi-was, though generally known as "Shot-nose," having suffered in the same battle the loss of this ornament to his face. Another Indian of whom I shall speak by and by, lost an ear, and there were throughout the tribe many marks of that great battle.

Shobonier's sons were fine looking, athletic men, and some of his grand children, if dressed in the garb of civilization, would have been called handsome. They certainly were very bright intelligent youths, and fond of gaining useful information. I only mention Shobonier's family, because the other members of the village do not figure prominently in this history. Besides, although their faces are still familiar to my mind's eye, as well as the part that some of them acted in the war with the Americans, their names are forgotten and their acts forgiven.

It was this company that were seated around the camp-fire, where I invited you to take a seat, to listen to old Shobonier's story, in explanation of the course of the mysterious performance witnessed upon my first night on the prairie. It was a glorious, mild, early Winter evening, and the orator was in fine spirits for the occasion, and he had a most attentive auditory. He spoke in his own language, which I understood but imperfectly, but it was translated by one of the grandsons, and afterward repeated, until I think I can relate it in a manner that will interest any reader who has a taste for Indian traditions and superstitions. This will be the burden of the next chapter

## CHAPTER II.

"Let our white brother open his ears and enlarge his heart."

These were the words of Shobonier before commencing the narrative that I am about attempting to give my readers. The leading features, sentiments, and conclusions are those of this great Indian orator. Of course I cannot give it in his peculiar style. He was an old story-teller. Such portions as I did not understand at first I had repeated to me from time to time. Although I represent Shobonier as the speaker, I necessarily have to put most of his words into my own style of language, which destroys much of the force of his. Some of the incidents he relates occurred in his presence, and others were told to him; and some few blanks I have endeavored to fill by subsequent information, or by imagination.

A word in explanation before we enter upon the narrative, which Shobonier said would require us to "enlarge our heart, for it is a tale of blood, and may cause a tender heart to wither as though it felt the fire which the Great Medicine kindled."

I may probably say that it was owing to our singular first meeting that an unusual bond of friendship existed between Shobonier and myself, which gave me the opportunity of hearing his story. It was a friendship that extended from all his family to mine, even to the small children, and continued up to the time that I parted with him upon the spot where we first met in the old burying-ground, when he was going away beyond the Mississippi. He had come to give the place he had held sacred a last farewell. He did not weep; I did; for I saw how sad he felt to see the graves of his fathers and children converted into a corn-field. An Indian seldom sheds a tear; he thinks it effeminate; but I am sure he had too much respect for me to lessen me in his esteem because I dropped a tear for an old man's woe. He had often paid me a high compliment in saying that the Great Spirit had given me a red man's heart. My rule was to deal justly; not to take advantage of their necessities nor ignorance, and no one ever went away hungry from my log cabin. Although in feeding these people, I "cast my bread upon the water" of a stream that I never expected to bring any return, it came back in a very unexpected way.

I made my location upon public land, expecting to preëmpt it. It proved to be a place which Shobonier intended to reserve, as he had a right to do upon two sections, but because it would disturb me he would not take it, nor sell his right to any other person, and went away without his land or money, leaving me free to buy my quarter section of Government.

So much in explanation of the character of my Indian friend, and the probability of his truthfulness.

When ready to begin his story, he said:

"I shall speak in my own tongue, for I wish my young men to hear what I say. Semilow, shall repeat my words for the white man. If he does not speak straight I shall understand and will direct his tongue. When my friend does not understand he shall ask me to speak again. Will he write words in his book? Then mine shall be all white."

This was said because he saw I was making notes in my memorandum.

Who can tell how much of the wild romance of these people has been lost by our mode of dealing with them, and because those who have had the opportunity to listen to their stories have not put them upon record. In my own case I should have lost much if I had not, since I have to begin my story with "thirty years ago."

"Let the pappooses go to the wigwam, and the squaws keep silent, and the young men give heed while I pour words into the ear of our white brother.

I am going to tell him why he saw us at Me-won-i-toc's grave, and why buffalo bones lie bleaching upon all the prairie, and in the groves, and by the side of the river, and why there are no buffaloes here now, as they were when I was a young man. Ah, then our people never knew what hunger was. Now, if our brother is ready, let him listen."

How many of the travelers and settlers upon the "grand prairie" of the period I have mentioned have observed and wondered at these buffalo bones.

How many who observed ever thought to inquire the cause of the only people who could tell? What if it was "only tradition!" What else is all history! Much more of the history of this continent might have been gathered from the traditions of the Indians, if it had been sought for before their senses were blunted by that curse to savage, as well as civilized life, which has been more murderous in its effects than tomahawk, scalping-knife and rifle together.

Few know how sad have been the effects of rum upon these people. It has often changed peaceable men into demons. Old Shobonier, whom I consider one of Nature's noblemen, told me that he killed his squaw in a fit of drunken insanity produced by liquor brought into their quiet village by a white man who came to teach to the heathen Christianity. Two of his sons fell by each other's hands. Poor old man, how he mourned for those victims of white men's cupidity. How he despised their wickedness. He would not often speak in our language, he so hated the actions and "lying words" of some of the "white skins." After I had gained his confidence I found that he could talk in my language better than I could in his, and I was thus able to draw out many interesting incidents during some years of familiar intercourse.

Intelligent as I found this old chief, I also learned that he was like all his race, full of superstition, and looked upon everything that he could not readily account for as somewhat supernatural. My sudden appearance before him on the night of the prairie fire made an impression that could not have been produced at any other time under ordinary circumstances.

This trait in the Indian character must be kept in mind by my readers to account for the influence that Me-won-i-toc obtained over the tribe.

It only needs some cunning trick of legerdemain to gain the character and position of a "great medicine." Many a white man has obtained by some trick this sort of influence.

Whatever influence I gained was unsought and was used to promote temperance and peace among them. In this I was successful. Part of my reward is the ability to tell my present audience old Shobonier's story. The facts are his. The style mine.

Let us then go back to the point where he said "listen."

This is what I heard:

"My white brother sees that the snow-spirit has touched my head. It was once like the raven's wing. It was many, many moons ago. It was before I wore the eagle's wing in my hair (the insignia of a warrior) that the great medicine who sleeps there came among us. Does my white brother mark that spot? It was the cabin of Me-won-i-toc. It tells him that it was not built by one of our race, but by one of yours."

The spot that Shobonier alluded to showed the outline of a log cabin, the oak logs of which had decayed until the mere form of the building was only visible, with an altar of earth and stones, which must have been gathered by great labor, still remaining opposite the center. It was probably the place where many a sacrifice of life had been made as a burnt offering to the Great Manitu. It was the only memento left to tell the time when, and it told it not in years, "it only said long, long ago." Now, let us again listen:

"No one knew when Me-won-i-toc came, nor whence. He sometimes talked of having crossed the beautiful river (Ohio), and that was all we knew. We were at war then with all the whites, and we knew that he could not have traveled so far through the red man's country unharmed if the Great Spirit had not protected him, and so we let him cook his venison by our fire, and lie down to sleep outside of our wigwam. He would not enter because there were squaws in it. He brought with him a great tomahawk, and the next day after he arrived the oak trees fell before it as though they were like this staff. With his horse he drew them together and commenced with his own hands to build that house. Some of our young men, seeing his great strength and power over the trees, came and helped him to lift one above another, and to gather these stones. With mud he made it all tight and warm. It had no opening except one near the top, and after it was finished not one of our people ever looked inside. Sometimes he would not come out for a whole moon. Then our squaws used to place roasted buffalo meat upon that altar at night, and in the morning it was gone. The good spirit carried it to Me-won-i-toc in his wigwam."

So thought the Indians undoubtedly. A sunken furrow in the ground from the side of the cabin to the altar convinced me that the "great medicine" had had a subterranean passage from his den, under the altar, so that he could obtain his food in that way; and no doubt thus he often kindled fires mysteriously.

"In a little while after Me-won-i-toc had been among us he became our "great medicine." He directed many of our great actions. He told us when and where to strike the white settlements, and sometimes he was the guide of the war-party. He told where to hunt and what game would be found. His counsel never failed, and our people always mourned for fear he would not return when he went away upon long journeys.

"Sometimes he would return gloomy and morose, and would not talk with us. The cause of these journeys and the black spirit in his heart were hidden from us a long time. At length he wanted my advice, and then he told it to me alone in his cabin. When he came away from the whites a great fire was burning his heart. He left an only child behind. She was a young squaw, white as the snow, and active as a young fawn and as gentle. He longed for this child. He wanted to bring her to his wigwam. He went back secretly to his old home, but the child was not there. Then he painted his face and went as an Indian. Then he heard that his child had been sent away, far away, to school. He could never find her. No one knew him in his strange garb and altered appearance, and thus he learned much about himself and others, of which I shall tell you by and by.

With the exception of pining after his child, he was always contented. He was the "great medicine" not only of our village, but of all the tribe.

It was always a source of regret to him that this child should be doomed to remain among a race whom, though they were his own flesh and blood, he hated with a big heart, and it was all bitter. It was the mas-sa-sau-ga's.

For one act of perfidy in a friend he would have doomed the whole race to perdition.

His child he had not seen since she was a little pappoose, and many Winters had spread their snows upon his cabin upon the great prairie since that time, and much blood had been spilt, and whether it came from the pale face or his red brother it gave the white snow the same color.

In all of our quarrels Me-won-i-toc was the foremost to counsel the destruction of the white men. Death! death! was his invariable cry, and whether the prisoner was old or young, warrior or maiden, the doom was the same. His brain was all blood.

I was a boy then and easily inflamed by his conjurations to make me hate every being to whom the Great Manitu had given a white skin, and, as I believed, a bad heart. For some reason, perhaps because I was always ready to execute Me-won-i-toc's bloody commands, I became one of his especial favorites, and at various times learned the cause of his hatred to his own race.

It was a strange perversion of a man's reason, that he should hate all because one was bad; but upon that point Me-won-i-toc was a most decided monomaniac, however shrewd he remained upon every other subject.

"The Good Spirit," said Shobonier, "had gone out of his heart, and a mas-sa-sau-ga had crept in while he slept on the prairie."

The mas-sa-sau-ga is a small black-spotted rattle-snake that infects the prairies and is very venomous, and often creeps into the Indian's wigwam, or early settler's log-cabin.

As everything is figurative with the Indian, it was peculiarly illustrative of Shobonier's meaning, to say the mas-sa-sau-ga had crept into the heart of Me-won-i-toc.

### ME-WON-I-TOC'S STORY.

The story of this strange being was substantially as follows, according to his own relation to Shobonier, and through him to me.

"I was born, said he, no matter where, or where I was married, but it was where the men went to the field with rifles, or to the old log meeting-house to hear some missionary preach the Gospel, prepared for the sudden onset of a savage foe from the near-by wilderness. My wife was all that man could wish in his pursuit after loveliness, and our union promised such a harvest of happiness as a sanguine nature expects when he engrafts a scion from a perfect tree in the roots of his own heart. I did not think of the canker worm that would enter the budding blossom of love before the golden fruit had reached perfection, and strike it to the ground, or leave it withered, bitter fruit, blasted at heart and blackened at the core, however fair the surface, and however tempting it might look upon the stem where it grew. Yonder crab-apples are not more sour and bitter than half the fruits of the sweetest unions of young lovers among the lying race of pale-faced deceivers."

At the time Me-won-i-toc was married he had a most intimate bosom friend, whose name was Sidney, that he loved like a brother, and still more, because it was through the agency of that friend that he became acquainted with Elfrenda, a sweet young girl, whom he made, as he trusted, his loving companion for a long and happy life. He even felt, until the night when he saw that friend and his wife for the last time, that he owed him a debt of gratitude which he never could pay. It was in consideration of this that he named the child which came about a year after marriage to bless their happy union, after his dear friend, calling her Sidney. She was all that a fond father could ask, in face, form, and mind, and she became very noted through the frontier settlement where she was born in consequence of a singular mark—one of the wonders produced by fright upon mother and offspring. This mark was indelible as well as unique, and was in after years a means of recognition in a manner and time calculated to strike terror to the horrified mind of a parent. In fact, it never was seen without causing a chill of terror at the thought of the narrow escape of her mother from a dreadful death by the bloody tomahawk in the uplifted hand of a frightfully savage Indian. How often Me-won-i-toc wished afterward that it had fallen where it was aimed, and thus left him to revenge death from the hand of a foe, instead of disgrace from that of a friend.

Border warfare and murder by the Indians of some of the people of defenseless frontier settlements, was a very common occurrence, and at the date alluded to by Me-won-i-toc that frontier might have been in New-York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, or Kentucky; scarcely as far west as Ohio. Where is it now? Certainly not in any of those States, or half a dozen still further west. The bones of the red men and the bones of the buffalo bleach on the prairie together.

One evening of the first year after marriage, as Me-won-i-toc was returning from his labor in the field, rifle in hand, he heard a fearful scream—it was that of a woman, and it came from the direction of his cabin. Painful apprehensions of danger quickened his steps, and horror chilled his blood when he came in sight of his own door; for there upon the very threshold stood his wife in the grasp of a ferocious Indian, who held her by the hair with his left hand, while in his right he brandished a tomahawk, red with the blood of his last victim, ready to fall deep into the brain of his present one. It was apparently kept from falling by less than the strength of a single thread. It was a trying moment, and required a cool, calculating mind, a steady hand and keen eye, for the least mistake would cause the death of a lovely, much loved wife. Full well the husband knew that the savage would not hesitate to strike, though he was sure the blow would cause his own death, as well as that of his victim.

Me-won-i-toc—I must call him by his Indian name—drew up his rifle almost instinctively to his face, with a view to shoot the Indian before he could strike the fatal blow. It was a long shot, yet he felt sure of the accuracy of his aim, but he found that he could not "draw a bead" upon the savage without danger of killing his wife at the same shot, for the Indian kept her steadily before him, while his own body swayed back and forth. He was gloating in her agony. In a moment more that suspended instrument of death might fall, and then all that would be left for Me-won-i-toc would be revenge—it would be too late to save. How he prayed that she might in her supplication for life, kneel down at the feet of her murderer. It was upon his tongue to call upon her to do so, but he was too far off to be understood, and the first sound of his voice would sever the slender thread which held her life suspended. He lived an age of agony in those few fleeting moments. He expected at every breath to see the uplifted weapon reeking in her precious blood. There had been ample time already for it to fall, but savage nature prevailed over prudence, and he held the bloody ax for her to gaze and shudder at, to satisfy his fiendish appetite for torturing his enemies. Like many others in all the walks of life, he strained a point too far, for while her brain reeled with distraction, he might have cloven her skull and scattered that brain upon the stone step where they stood. At length he was satisfied with her agony, and the grasp was already tightened upon the handle to strike the fatal blow, when his victim fainted and sunk down at his feet, leaving his breast bear to Me-won-i-toc's deadly aim. The fall—the flash—the bound—the death "sigh"—were all simultaneous, and the dead Indian and Me-won-i-toc's fainted wife lay bathed in blood upon the same broad stone, both their heads resting upon the door sill.

As soon as he had made the shot he gave a yell—the signal of alarm to his neighbors, and sprang forward to rescue his wife from the companions of the one he had slain, whom he expected to find within the house, but no others were there, none had been there, and probably the Indian whom he had killed had come alone, to gratify a spirit of revenge for a friend destroyed by some of the scouts of the settlers, perhaps by the unerring rifle of Me-won-i-toc himself.

Ascertaining that all was safe within, he bore his wife to her bed, where she spent several days in alternate fits of syncope and labor-pains, and finally gave birth to a daughter, marked with one of those singular impressions of fright, fear, anxiety, or other strong effect upon the mother's mind.

The bloody tomahawk which had impended over life had left its impression indelibly printed upon her child. Fortunately, the hideous mark was not upon an exposed part of her skin, it being situated on her back, just below and midway between the shoulder-blades, red as blood and nearly as large as the instrument itself. Notwithstanding this mark of terror in the mind of her mother, Sidney grew up almost devoid of fear, particularly fear of Indians, though all her life was spent upon the frontier, amid the constant alarm of that period in our history.

Me-won-i-toc and his wife had lived happily together some one or two years, when a call was made upon the militia of that district to go out upon a scouting expedition of two or three weeks, and Sidney, Me-won-i-toc's early friend, was among the number drafted. He appeared well satisfied that he was to go, and came to Me-won-i-toc's house to make his final arrangements. Elfrenda was agitated at the idea of his going, and through a sympathetic affection, perhaps arising from that cause, he was taken suddenly ill the night before the little troop were to start, and expressed so much regret at his inability to go, that Me-won-i-toc, ever ready for such an excursion, at once offered to take his place among the scouts, provided Sidney would remain to look after his affairs during his absence. This proposition was readily agreed to: Sidney promised to fill the place of his absent friend in the most satisfactory manner.

Me-won-i-toc did not observe at the time though he thought of it afterward, that his wife rather favored this exchange. To him the offer of his friend to remain with his family, while he was gone upon a tour of pleasure—real pleasure to him—seemed quite an act of disinterestedness.

The canker-worm had not yet been felt that was gnawing at his heart. The fire was not yet kindled that would turn that heart to a blackened cinder. The mas-sa-sau-ga was crawling into the white man's heart. He came slowly and as still as the deer comes upon the grass. We shall hear his rattle after he has made his bite.

## CHAPTER III.

### CONTINUATION OF ME-WON-I-TOC'S STORY.

"Serpents that creep into men's houses."

At length old Shobonier roused from his reverie. The first sentiment uttered was evidently a continuation of his reflections upon the rattle-snake. Having relieved his mind by these portentous words he was ready to go on with this story of Me-won-i-toc's early life.

"He will rattle by-and-by."

At daylight the next morning Me-won-i-toc left his home, accoutered for a long tramp; hunting that most hunted of all American game, his fellow man with a red skin. It was understood that the first night's bivouac would be at a post thirty miles distant, but owing to an accident which happened to one of the men, or else it was a direct interposition of the Great Spirit, the party halted at a well-known camping ground only three miles from Me-won-i-toc's cabin.

He could easily have returned to spend the night, but as an early start in the morning was intended, he stretched himself with his companions upon their blankets over their leafy bed around the camp-fire, to seek that refreshing slumber that comes so readily to tired woodsmen. All slept, and all enjoyed it but Me-won-i-toc. His sleep brought horrors worse than death, when death comes in a mild form.

Three times he dreamed, and starting waked from the same horror of two serpents which were entwining and suffocating him to death. But what was most unaccountable, these slimy monsters had heads and human faces of well known features. They were those of his wife and best friend.

At the third waking, he started up in an agony of terror, determined to sleep no more, though it was still in the early part of the night. No doubt his face was haggard with fear, such as the sight of a savage foe could not give it.

As he walked away from his companions and the camp-fire, he saw a few rods distant a little light, and busy around the small fire the form of a gray-headed old hunter, who was always attached to these scouting-parties, as an indispensable item of their equipage. His common appellation was "Doctor," because he always had a remedy for every woods-accident or disease, and was uncommonly skillful in dressing wounds. Some who were inclined to credulousness. as often called him "conjurer," as they did doctor. Conjurer or no conjurer, he could track an Indian where others could see "no sign." By a natural power of observation and by long practice he had acquired a skill that was truly wonderful.

He seemed often possessed of events almost before they had transpired, and to read a person's thoughts before the individual had fairly acknowledged to his own mind that he was elaborating them in the hidden recesses of his brain.

"It is all guess work," said those who had not felt his power. Well be it so. Yet he certainly had a faculty of guessing aright. He surely did so upon the present occasion.

As Me-won-i-toc approached the doctor he heard him say, as though talking to his fire:

"So, you have dreamed it out at last blind man. Any one with eyes would have seen it long ago, while awake. Fools always see best with their eyes shut. Cuckolds are not usually blind. Spurs only grow on some heads while they are dreaming."

These words were not addressed to Me-won-i-toc—they were uttered in a low tone as though a part of some act of conjuration. Me-won-i-toc thought he could not know of his approach, yet they were evidently intended for his ear, and he was not slow to interpret their hidden meaning. His first impulse was anger, and he sprang like a tiger at the old man's throat, calling him "Villain! Liar! Foul-mouthed old slanderer. Who told you that I was dreaming, or what I dreamed? Speak or die."

The old man shook him off as he would a cat that had jumped on him, and continued stirring the ashes of his fire.

At length he turned to where Me-won-i-toc stood with uplifted club waiting further provocation to strike, and said calmly:

"Liar! Villain! Ha! Well that is better than fool—dreamer—blind man. Better than to have a *dear friend* to cajole me off into the woods, to cuckold me in my absence. Fools have wives. I hav'nt.

Quick as flash almost, he drew the burned stick from the fire, with which he had been stirring the ashes, and touched the hand of Me-won-i-toc that held the club. In ordinary times that would have been sufficient provocation for him to strike, but now the club fell from his grasp as though the hand were palsied, That slight touch of fire had made him as weak as an infant. No, it was not the fire of the old man's wand, it was the fire of his words. They did not burn the flesh—they consumed the heart. It was blazing now. It will be coals and ashes soon.

What slight words had awaked horrid suspicions. Yet he could not, would not believe that they had any better foundation than the fleeting cloud of a dream.

"I will not believe it," he said, at last, though what was the antecedent of "it" could only be inferred from what the doctor had previously spoken.

"Go and see," was the reply, in the same quiet tone. "Go and see, and be forever miserable. Remain and be miserable, not to know, and yet suspect."

It took but a moment to reach the spot where his horse was spanceled, and adjust the bit and saddle. He leaped at a bound into the seat, but turned back to reach his rifle from its rest near where he had slept.

As he did so, the doctor laid his hand upon his arm, and said in a solemn tone, "promise me before you leave that you will not ——,"

"Murder! I know it. I know that was what you wanted, but I will not promise."

"Then you shall not go." He held the rein, while Me-won-i-toc struggled to get free. The sleepers began to stir, and the captain said "what is it doctor?"

"Be quiet," said he to Me-won-i-toc in a whisper, "and listen to me, or one word will consign you to infamy. If I speak 'deserter.'"—Me-won-i-toc put his hand to his mouth covering his lips; a mute but expressive language of silence. The doctor then spoke aloud to the captain and said:

"Lay still. All right. Don't disturb the boys. He has brought the wrong bullet molds. He will be back in an hour." Then whispering again to Me-won-i-toc, he said: "If you kill, your child will be the daughter of a murderer. Keep your own soul free of guilt. You must not strike them with the bloody hatchet."

Again his superstitious feelings towards his companions were aroused, for just then he was thinking that he would have his gun and take that means to put the guilty pair to death; that is, if he found them guilty.

"Thou wilt not murder? Promise."

The word rang in his ear. The thought of branding his child's name with that terrible stain determined him.

"Do you promise?"

"Yes! come what may, I will not touch a hair of their heads."

The hand that held his rein was loosened, and the old man told him to creep upon his own house as he would upon the wigwam of the red warrior; and with that advice, and with murder ringing in his ear, he rode rapidly through the woods by the dim starlight toward his own clearing, which he had reached before he had fairly concentrated his thoughts to any certain point of action.

Hitching his horse to a swinging limb in the edge of the bush he crept cautiously up to the house. All was quiet. The coals and half burned sticks of a log-heap fire threw a warm glow over the room—though but one room of a log cabin, it had been to him a happy home. He had often stopped a moment upon the same spot to look at the same cheerful hearth, and then with a heart as bright and cheerful he entered without a dread, such as now was giving that heart bitter pangs.

There were two beds in the room, both of which should have been occupied. The light fell fair upon one, showing the covering undisturbed. The sweat rolled down his face as though he had been within an inch of that fire. A fond, confiding husband almost saw his own dishonor. Then came the cold feel of the serpent, tugging at his heart. He felt the sting, but he shook the reptile off. He would not yet believe. That which seemed all wrong might yet be found all right. He crept softly to the door. It was fast. True, all doors and windows in that day were made with bolts and bars, but lately this family had grown careless in their use. Still that was no proof. The mere fact of his being away should be a sufficient caution to a prudent wife to bar the door against any lurking outside foe, though a greater foe might be within. In fact this trifling circumstance gave him hope. He hoped that something had called Sidney away, and being thus left alone, Elfrenda had fastened the door. It was the bed that he should have occupied that was empty. A curtain hid the other. Still he could see that the little trundle-bed held that darling child which he had promised he would not brand with the name of murderer's daughter. This made him calm. He was now all anxiety to get into the house without disturbing the sleepers. At length he thought of a small opening from the outside into the cellar. Through this he crawled. then with his hunting knife he cut the leather hinges of a trap-door which he could not otherwise open because the child's bed stood partly over it. In a moment more he stood with his knife in hand by his own bed. Own bed no more! The impulse was strong and he grasped the knife nervously. The doctor's words came to his ear—"Stain not thy soul with murder." How could he resist the tempter! He looked upon the face of his innocent child, and that gave him "the big heart," and he put the knife back into the sheath and left the two serpents of his dream sleeping as only the innocent should sleep.

Though he left them undisturbed he was anxious to leave a memento of his visit. Casting his eyes about to see what it should be, his sight rested upon "the bloody hatchet." Hurriedly detaching it from its place, he suspended it by a single thread directly over the heads of the sleepers. With the still tread of an Indian he crept back by the same way that he had entered, after taking one long, last look at his wife and child, in the glimmering light of the waning fire, burning upon a hearth that he would never more call his own. It was well that both slept so soundly, or both might have slept in death. The fire that burned in Me-won-i-toc's heart was like the fire in the dry swamp—it smouldered beneath the surface. but if it had been fanned to flame the tallest pines would fall before it. He would have given a parting kiss to his child, but prudence prevailed, and he bade her and her mother an eternal adieu—both unconscious of his presence as though they had been in their tomb.

Half an hour after this visit to his house he sat over the embers of the camp fire of the scouts, silent, sad, gloomy and miserable as mortal can be, who longs for death, because life has lost all its charms.

He made no attempt to sleep, and as all around him, even the doctor, had gone to the quiet home of the dreamer, he had no one to interrupt his meditations of wretchedness.

At an early hour he aroused his companions to get ready for the day's march, for he was anxious to move away as fast and as far from his home as possible; hoping, vain hope, that flying from the scene of his misery, he would escape from himself. It is an idle fallacy in which we are all apt to indulge.

The busy morning stir of such an encampment would be a scene for pleasant observation to those who are unacquainted with life among the borderers.

The company is usually divided into squads of six, under charge of an inferior officer, who directs the movements of his men, assigning the duty of each, in camp, or when separated from the main body, and exercising supreme authority. One of the number, generally a volunteer duty, is selected as cook, who is exempted from all other camp work, his companions taking care of his horse, and getting wood and water and arranging for lodging. As in the present case, the first business of the cooks was to prepare a hasty breakfast of fried bacon, bread and coffee, each man helping himself to a tin cup full of the beverage, and a handful of the bread and meat; unless he should happen to indulge in the luxury of a chip or piece of bark for a plate. Every man carries a belt knife, and if he wishes a fork, such things grow upon every bush. He needs no provocative of appetite—his night in the open air, his breakfast room o'erarched by forest trees, will give him that to perfection.

While the meal is preparing, the horses are got ready, and camp equipage packed for the march, so that nothing remains but the coffee-pots and frying-pans to fasten upon the pack-horses, as every man attaches his own cup to his saddle-bow, and often mounts before he has swallowed all his food. The awake—the preparation—the march—of such a company of hardy pioneers, when there is no danger, no need of caution, is a rough specimen of real enjoyment of life. Lively jokes at each other's expense, but intended for general amusement, are the current coin of the morning. True, they are sometimes roughly put, but without malice, and though the laugh may turn upon one for a moment, he dexterously throws it back upon another the next. All whining for the comforts of home left behind them, is treated with unmitigated contempt.

It was in this spirit of jocularity that the companions of Me-won-i-toc rallied him upon his "homesick appearance." When it came out that he had actually been home during the night, "after his bullet moulds," they made the old woods ring with merriment, at the idea of an "Indian hunter going home to stay the first night." They little thought that he would never go home again. They little thought that at the end of their march, when all had penetrated the wilderness so far as any of them dared, that one of their company would be missing from their last camp fire, and that his track would lead directly, and alone into "the Indian country."

This was all the tidings that his companions could carry back to his late home. They knew that during all the time they had been together, he was gloomy and reckless of life—none new the cause except the Doctor, and he only by a sort of intuition; for Me-won-i-toc had only said "I did not kill," but gave no other information, nor did he need to—it was clear to the mind of the Doctor, that what he had seen upon that visit, was the cause of his present gloom; and that it was the reason of his absenting himself from the company in a way that left no doubt of its being voluntary, and with an intention of never returning.

Some of the party, however, were less charitable, and fully expected to find "deserter," as they termed him, with his young wife at home.

How they were mistaken—how they were disappointed, when they found the first and most eager inquiries, as they neared the settlement, and from every man in the crowd at the place of disbanding the party. was for Me-won-i-toc. Then for the first time they heard the tale of horror that ushered in the day after the departure of the band upon their forest range.

The story told by Sidney was that the bright sun was shining into the cabin before he awoke, and then he was startled by a piercing scream of Elfrenda, Me-won-i-toc's wife, and springing out of bed and running across the room to hers, he saw her eyes fixed with a stare of terror upon some object above her, and looking in that direction himself, he saw the terrible tomahawk that had once before seemed suspended by less than a single thread over her head, apparently unsustained by any earthly agency. No wonder that she was alarmed. The thread that held it being black, was invisible in the dim light, and the first idea suggested to her guilty mind was that some mysterious agency was about to take vengeance upon her for the wrong done her absent husband.

It was not singular as the reminiscenses connected with that blood-stained ax, crowded upon her mind, that she fell into a swoon, and that one followed another in such rapid succession that fearful convulsions succeeded each syncope.

Fortunately, in the course of the morning, a neighbor happened in, and then others were called, and the nearest physician sent for; but he lived a dozen miles away, and came too late to do any good, for her reason was gone, and she raved all day about her husband being about to strike her dead with the bloody tomahawk, or about the long practised arts of her seducer to win her from her wronged husband.

It was fearful—dreadful to behold the writhings of pain, and hear the self-accusations of her guilty conscience.

Finally, before the doctor arrived, she fell into a stupor of insensibility. He gave her something that aroused her from the lethargic state, and, surprising to all, she walked perfectly sane and calm, and all hoped that she was convalescent. The doctor shook his head, and asked her if she had anything upon her mind that she would like to say, if she thought she should never get well. She answered:

"Yes, much. Where is Sidney?" Some one brought her child. She kissed her fondly, and said: "Love your father. Forget your mother. Farewell. Not her—the other Sidney."

He was called. He did not come readily. Those who had heard her ravings through the day, did not wonder. He protested his innocence of her wild accusations, and did not wish to hear them renewed. They told him "she is calm now;" but that gave him still greater dread. After a little hesitation he approached the bed. She fixed her eyes upon him, as though trying to make sure that he was the man or to read his thoughts, and then said solemnly: "Seducer—murderer—to you I owe my death—for it is here—and I speak in the presence of that dread messenger, words of truth. It is you who have exercised the arts of a sorcerer over me, and planted a guilty conscience in my breast where all was harmony before.

It was you that counterfeited sickness, and won upon the feelings of your friend, till you got my husband to go away with the scouts, leaving a viper to sting him to death upon his own hearth-stone—when he returns—God help you.

It was you, sleeping in my husband's bed that first awoke and saw the vision of that instrument of death just ready to fall, cutting into my very brain. There—it was there—there—it is there now—it is falling—oh save me. My husband strikes—it is justice, but oh! mercy—mercy—God forgive a guilty wife."

Those present did not push forward at once. They stood as though petrified with horror. Then, seeing the dying woman motionless, they moved a little nearer the bed. The doctor waved them back.

"She is dead."

Yes, she is dead. Just as the sun is tipping the trees with gold on the eastern edge of Me-won-i-toc's clearing, the spirit of Elfrenda, mixed with the world of spirits in upper air.

As soon as the shock of such a terrible death had passed, some of those present looked about for the seducer, to know what he had to say to such cutting words of accusation.

He had nothing to say—he was gone. Old hunters are quick on the track. One ran to the stable. He was just in time to hear a horse clattering down the Spring Branch Road.

"He will go first to his own cabin said the man, and then clear the country. I will head him, or break my own neck."

That was the intention of Sidney. His pursuer had as much decision for instant action as himself. It is a characteristic of all new country pioneers. It was but a thought with him, and he was upon his own horse, rifle in hand, and after the fugitive. Not by the same road; that would be useless.

A foot-path led across the hill, intersecting the road two miles ahead, and only half the distance, but it terminated at a precipice, down which no man could ride, yet that path he took. Just as he reached the rocks, down which only a nimble footman could scramble, Sidney was coming round the point, twenty yards distant in full view. It was too late for his pursuer, whose name was Jed. Strawn, to get down to the road, or even dismount, before the other could pass. Sidney saw him, and knew his purpose, and at first seemed disposed to push by, but Strawn called to him, imperatively: "Stop, or die."

He brought his rifle to his face as he spoke, and Sidney knew full well that his aim was as sure as death, and he saw too, that it was now steady at his own head, and he quailed. He too had his rifle, and quick almost as thought, he slipped from his horse, placing him as a shield between himself and his foe, and brought his own gun to bear upon him. Strawn saw the motion, and was as quick as he was in the same thing. There they stood looking at one another over the sights of their rifles, with only a little spot of each visible to the other. Neither was willing to fire, for there was no malice between them, and the death of one might bring the punishment of murder upon the other. Sidney well knew that he was morally, if not legally a murderer now, and that the vengeance of a rough people without much regard for legal quibbles, awaited him if he did not escape. At any rate, if Me-won-i-toc should return, and learn the truth, his life would not be worth the price of the half ounce of lead it would cost to destroy it. As these thoughts agitated him, he grew desperate. He would have taken the life of Strawn, upon the plea of necessity to save his own, but so small a portion of his person was visible that he dare not risk the shot.

It was a sort of Indian warfare that both understood; keeping hid behind a tree or other shield, maneuvering to draw the fire of each other, when the one who made the first shot and missed his aim, would fall an easy prey. It was not the purpose of Strawn to take the life of the other; he only wished to prevent his escape and hold him for the vengeance of Me-won-i-toc, or due course of law. He told him, however, if he attempted to move forward, he should die, and Sidney well knew that he would keep his word. Strawn thought that if he held him thus at bay a few minutes, some of his companions who saw his hasty departure, would follow to see what would be the result.

But there was no time to lose. It would soon be dark, and then the fugitive could mount and ride away in tolerable safety. Sidney thought of this too; but then he dreaded the arrival of another, as much as Strawn hoped for it.

While they stood thus glaring at each other, Strawn heard a noise on the path he came, but could not look round to see who approached. Sidney heard the same, and felt that now or never was his chance, and fired. Without waiting to see the result of his shot, he sprung upon his horse and in another moment would have been out of reach. As he drew the reins, he glanced upward and saw Strawn's horse make a sudden plunge forward, and both came over the ledge together.

"I am safe," he said mentally; but he was mistaken. The noise had been made by Strawn's dog, which had arrived just in time to witness the shot and its effects, and instinct told him that the man in the road was his master's foe, and he needed no bidding to the conflict. He sprung with a single bound over his master and horse as they were falling, and before Sidney was aware of the object; the dog had his horse by the nose. He reached forward and struck a mad blow with his rifle; the dog jumped aside and the muzzle struck a rock, and the barrel rattled down among the stones, leaving the breech in the striker's hand. At the next bound the dog snatched the reins suddenly from Sidney's hold, and thus he was left unarmed and powerless, a prisoner to a dog, and without daring to dismount, for his captor told him plainly if he did there would be a struggle between empty hands and sharp teeth.

Just as Strawn had anticipated, some of those who saw him ride away upon a path which they knew he could not traverse beyond the "big ledge," felt a curiosity to ascertain what game was up now, and came on as fast as they could walk and found him so entangled under his horse, though not very seriously hurt, that he could not get to the assistance of his faithful dog. He was soon extricated and placed upon Sidney's horse, while its owner was compelled to walk, and that night found a lodging place in a rude frontier prison.

It was several months to the time of court, but there was no disposition to take vengeance upon the guilty man till after the return of the scouts without Me-won-i-toc.

Then the captain of the band declared martial law and ordered the trembling wretch before him, and applied to "the Doctor" to say what should be his punishment.

"Shall it be death from lead or hemp?"

"Neither."

"Banishment and confiscation of his property?"

"No! only in part. He shall give his horse to Strawn, for the one he shot. The cost of a halter shall go to buy a collar for the dog. His property shall all be legally made over in trust to Strawn, for the use of the little girl he has taken charge of. Her name shall be changed."

"To what?"

"We will call her Melligo."

"What a queer name. What does it mean?"

"It is the honey-dew; and like it this child will grow to sweeten all the leaves of the forest."

"The Doctor is full of odd conceits; but that is very pretty, and as we shall call her Melli, it will be a sweet name. What say you men?"

There was a shout of approval. In fact, "the Doctor" was never disputed. Sidney readily assented to all the arrangements, and put his signature at once to the papers.

"What next," said the captain. Anything further, Doctor?"

"Only one thing—a mere trifle—soon accomplished."

"What is it?"

The Doctor whispered a word in the Captain's ear. The prisoner overheard and shuddered. He wished then that Strawn had fired, with good aim at short range. The punishment was worse than death. It was soon accomplished, and the seducer was told to go where he pleased. It pleased him to go where he never was seen again in that settlement.

By all, the wisdom of the doctor and justice of the court-martial were approved.

Little Melli grew up all that the Doctor had predicted. She sweetened the forest leaves. We shall hear from her again.

## CHAPTER IV.

"Why seeks the mysterious madman communion with his race?"

Having told the reader why Me-won-i-toc became the singular being that he was, while a resident upon the bank of that inlet of Lake Michigan, whose original name of O-coney-mic Se-a-ba signified "Beaver-dam River," and which name is now only known to a very small number of the old hunters of that region, I shall again take up old Shobonier's narrative of the life of "the Great Medicine."

It seems that Me-won-i-toc really possessed some medical skill, which, coupled with his assumed character, gave him such a firm hold upon the Indians, that he was really the governing power.

Did he ever think of the home he had abandoned? Yes, but only to long after his child. He could have murdered all beside, for "the Mas-sa-sau-ga was in his heart."

Thus lived Me-won-i-toc, an Indian in heart, and though his white skin clung to him, it covered nothing but blackness. He had everything he could desire for food, as all were ready to share with him, and game was then so plenty that it required but little effort to procure an abundance. He often foretold with surprising accuracy the results of hunting-parties, or scouts sent into the frontier settlements for scalps, until he came to be almost universally acknowledged as one having dealings with the Manitou.

While he had such power over the minds of these simple people it is not to be wondered at that his prediction of a famine was listened to and believed by many of the tribe, notwithstanding it was known as the "great buffalo year." This was as near as I could fix the date, by the very uncertain chronology of Indian tradition. somewhere about 1786, as it was after the "big war," and some 25 years before the "little war."

"The Great Spirit," the Indians said, "had sent the buffalo far toward the rising sun to feast his red children," and child-like they began to slay and eat, without a thought of laying by a store for a hard Winter. This displeased Me-won-i-toc, and he told them of a time when they would pick the bones that the dogs rejected.

None believed the prophecy, if we may judge by the way they lent themselves to the excitement of the moment.

At last a great buffalo-feast was proposed to propitiate the good Manitou, and, like our old-fashioned New-England Thanksgiving, show their gratitude by eating an enormous amount of food in one day.

A pit was dug in the side of a clayey bank, and a roaring fire kept burning two days, heating the earth and a mass of stones red-hot. When the fire had sufficiently burned down a long pole was thrust through the carcass of a fat buffalo cow, and laid across the pit, which was covered with matting and bark till the second day, when the whole mass of meat was thoroughly baked. Then commenced the feast—accompanied with all sorts of rude sports and dancing, and such a noise as would frighten any one not accustomed to the discordant din of pandemonium.

The roasted carcass was hoisted out of the pit, and the pole supported upon forked posts, so that the flesh could be cut away and served out to the dancing, shouting throng as it came around, each receiving a morsel of perhaps four or five pounds of the luscious roast. So they ate, and danced, and shouted and sung, until they were all full, hoarse, tired and satisfied.

The burden of the song was the promise of much meat and little work during the Winter.

Me-won-i-toc kept himself quite aloof, shut up in his cabin, gloomy and uncommunicative. All the season he had lived there alone, while the tribe were away at their various Summer residences, and favorite places for hunting and fishing. He pretended to be at work digging a cellar to his cabin, because, as he said, a terribly hard Winter was approaching.

The truth is that Me-won-i-toc felt his power over the Indians giving way, and he was preparing for a great stroke of policy—magic—to regain his ascendency. He had advised the feast, and pointed out the spot to hold it, but grew angry at the want of reverence to him which some of the young Indians manifested by treating his predictions of a hard Winter with contempt and unbelief. "This," said Shobonier, "was why he shut himself up alone while all the rest of us were enjoying the feast. We were therefore somewhat surprised in the midst of it to find the great White Medicine among us, though no one saw him enter. He was fantastically dressed, but his garb was emblematical of the anger of the Great Manitou at his red children, and that seemed to strike an awe upon the old men, and the young ones and squaws were silent without bidding. He had already made a great impression. He said no word to any one; he did not even seem to notice that any one but himself and the spirits that he conversed with were present. He approached the fire and drew out a quantity of coals upon a piece of bark, and formed a circle of fire around a flat stone upon which he stood. Then he took one of the dried entrails of the buffalo, which he drew from his bosom—some said from his mouth—and placed that on the coals which completely encircled him. A good many fell down and hid their faces. but others looked on to see the end of the magic incantation. But they did not see it. The entrail upon the coals began to squirm as though it was alive, and then arose such a dense smoke from some substance it contained that the magician was completely hidden. They heard his voice for a minute humming a low chant and then all was still. When the smoke cleared away, the ground and stone, all within the circle was covered with a small blue flame, but Me-won-i-toc was gone. The general impression was that he was consumed in his own fire.

" While petrified with astonishment they were suddenly startled to see the mysterious man approach from his cabin, completely enrobed in white, with a wand of white feathers in his right hand, and a snow-owl in his left, and a cap made of the white tails of the deer. His face and hands too were as white as snow. It was the costume of the Snow Spirit.

All present who had witnessed his disappearance in the smoke half an hour before were now satisfied that he possessed some supernatural power, and contiued in that belief up to the time I heard this tale related.

I must own that I was a little skeptical, and quite confirmed in my unbelief of spiritual aid, when I afterward examined the ground and could distinctly trace the mark of a sunken trench from the cabin cellar, that looked just as though a small arched-way had fallen in as the timber decayed, and that led to a flat stone which might have covered a hole large enough to admit a man, and this lay close to the rim of the almost filled up pit where the buffalo had been roasted. This discovery entirely knocked away all the romance of the "mysterious disappearance," of the Great Medicine. Like many other conjurers of mankind, Me-won-i-toc put on this garb of sanctity and mystery, to accomplish his own purposes and dupe his fellows to gain power and influence for himself.

It is probable that he dug this trench for the double purpose of draining his cellar, facilitating his escape, if necessary, and also aiding him in his magical incantations. It had the desired effect to win full confidence in his supernatural power to predict coming events. So great was the awe that he now inspired, when he came representing the Snow Spirit, that quite a number of eyes turned toward the lake, as though they expected to see the gathering clouds of the storm that he had predicted,

He was quick to understand the bent of their minds, without apparently noticing the direction of their gaze.

"My brothers," said he solemnly, "are looking for the snow cloud. It is not yet time. But before two moons are swallowed by the great dark, the white rain will hide the world, and the wolf will eat the buffalo and howl on the track of the hunter. Are the buffalo now plenty? Look to it, old men; see that the young hunters bring in much meat, and that the squaws save it by fire and smoke. See that they fill many mococks with buffalo fat, and that dried tongues are as plenty as the teeth of their children, or they will die of hunger when the Snow Spirit comes in anger to hide the red man's hunting ground; for he will scatter his white feathers upon the earth so thick that no man can follow the track, and the buffalo shall lie down at night where he never will see the light, and the earth shall be hidden from its children as darkly as when the fire swallowed me out of your sight.

"But the sun will come again, and the snow will go down the little streams into the great water," a young man ventured to say.

"True," Me-won-i-toc responded, "and so will the sun go away to his bed beyond the great mountains, and the buffalo will follow—the last one will feed the red brethren that live at the foot of the first hill, where the 'big river' is like this little brook. If you would eat buffalo meat, you must go where the white warriors have not yet cursed the earth. It is away beyond the 'Father of Rivers.' The Snow Spirit is a great hunter; he will kill a thousand buffalo in one night to teach his children that he is angry. While the young men waste their strength around the roasted carcass the white wolves are on their track. They will soon be here planting corn where you are dancing the buffalo feast. The Great Spirit is angry with his red children."

Me-won-i-toc was silent. He looked around with the feeling of an orator who is conscious that he has made an impression upon his audience. Every one was as silent as himself. An hour before and all were as noisy as a flock of blackbirds, and almost as full of life and motion. But his words had filled them with awe at the dreadful calamity which he predicted—few dared to doubt—none to dispute.

Me-won-i-toc turned his eyes first upon one and then the other, as much as to say, "What have you to offer in this emergency?" At last, his look settled upon Meltonewah, an old gray-haired chief, whose words were wisdom, and to whose counsel the tribe were wont to look for direction in peace or war. Every eye followed that of Me-won-i-toc, and rested upon the old man who had taken a seat in the council. To him they now mutely appealed to calm the excitement that had prevailed since the magical disappearance occurred. He felt that he was expected to speak, and arose and looked up to the hazy clouds and muttered "not yet." Then he stretched his neck as though he would look over a scope of twenty miles of prairie that lay before him. Then he waved his hand all around, and counted his fingers over and over, but he could not number the imaginary herd of buffalo on the great pasture stretching away in every direction, and so he referred to his hair to show that they could not be counted.

"Will they all leave their bones in the great snow on the fire land?"

The term always applied to the prairie by the Indians, is "fire land," indicating their opinion that it is the the annual burning which prevents the growth of timber.

Me-won-i-toc answered as though the voice had come from the air; he did not seem to address the speaker.

"I have said—the buffalo are going toward the place where the sun sleeps. The hunters will soon follow. A few of the old, the crippled and the worthless of both will remain for the wolves. The bones of man and beast will all be treated with like contempt. They will be kicked by those with whom neither the Indian nor buffalo can live where either can smell the breath of the other. The red man drinks the fire-water of his white brother and dies. The Great Spirit is angry and would have a sacrifice."

The Great White Medicine is one of us. He says the Great Spirit is angry. What shall his red children do to appease his anger? What sacrifice shall we offer? Shall the old man cast his body into the fire?"

He stepped forward as though he would offer himself upon the burning coals in the pit, but Me-won-i-toc arrested him with an impatient gesture. "Do you think the Manitou will be satisfied with one whose head is already under the snow. It must be a soft-haired young maiden."

"Is it one of these?" said the old man as he glanced around to see which of his favorite children he must give up. Some of those who had treated Me-won-i-toc with disrespect for his assumption of supernatural power, trembled now with fear that he would point them out as victims. But he answered emphatically: "No."

"Who shall it be? Will my brother speak? Shall I send my young men away to the west and bring a young Menominie maiden; as cunning as the beaver; as smooth as a young otter; as lively as a squirrel; as docile as a young fawn; as bright as the eagle's eye; as sweet as the fragance of the lily; as swift as the wing of the swallow; and shall we offer her upon the blazing fire? If we roast her alive as we have the flesh of yonder carcass, will the Manitou be appeased?"

"Is the skin of a Menominie girl white? Can a red man offer one of his own color to the White Spirit that sends the snow?"

What mysterious fate impelled this strange man onward, to seek the life of one of his own kindred? The old man replied:

"The mist is going away from my old eyes. The Great Medicine says the maiden must come from the pale faces. Will my young men go?"

A dozen athletic fellows, headed by young Meltonewah, sprung to their feet and began the war dance around the old man and Me-won-i-toc. He said:

"You see, they are ready. With the light of the next sun, let them start toward where he comes from. When they come to the country of the pale faces, let them take the first woman, old or young, fair or ugly. If it happen that the Great Spirit guides them to a young virgin, pure and white as the swan, and like the young Menominie you would have sent for, let her be brought here as carefully as the white mother carries her papoose, and she shall be the sacrifice, and the Snow Spirit shall be appeased. But if she chance not to be such a one, or if she die on the journey, or if in any way she should be rescued from the fire before her spirit has gone up in flame, then will the Great Spirit still be angry—the snow will come like falling clouds, and the last of the buffalo will go to his great sleep, and woe to this village. The pale face will come and plow up the bones of your fathers now sleeping peacefully on yonder hill, and their dogs shall eat carrion in the graves of your chiefs and warriors. Let my words be marked. If you find the maiden more lovely than the brightest of the spirit land, let the young men beware. If the hot blood of one of them is warmed into life by her look or touch, it will be to him a terrible death. Are you all as brave as the wild cat, fighting for her young—as fleet as young deer—as cunning as the 'possum, when he feigns death—and can you hide your tracks like birds—are your hearts all ice, where love or pity could not live—can you crawl like snakes, swim like fish, run like the dog that outleaps the frightened doe—will you burn your eyes with red hot coals, sooner than shed a tear for the soft-skinned pale face, when you you see her perish in the flames?"

They gave a yell that might have been mistaken for one from Dante's Inferno, as their assent to all these propositions.

"Then go—my blessing if you succeed—my curse if you fail. Let me not hear that one of you carried a white heart. By light to-morrow you will be on your way. Go toward the sun. It is a long journey."

They listened to the talk, as it were a mandate from a sovereign, and at once made instant preparation to obey. All of the most athletic young men of the village were equipped before morning for their long journey, of the end of which they had no conception. They were to travel due east and to take the first pale-face woman that should fall in their way. If fair, then the Good Spirit had guided them; if otherwise, their fate would be sealed by the "Bad Manitou."

What anxious, though rude savage prayers, were offered for the success of this band, and to propitiate the good Manitou, as they set forth and during all the time they were absent.

What could have been Me-won-i-toc's object? It is impossible to say. Perhaps the love of power over our fellow-creatures, that seems to be implanted in all animal natures.

Perhaps he felt his authority waning among the people for whom he had cast off his own race, and had devised a devilish plan to regain his influence, and at the same time gratify his vengeful spirit upon the whites. By pretending that he must have a white maiden for the sacrifice instead of an Indian one, perhaps he wished not only to impress upon the minds of the superstitious people that it would be more acceptable to the Snow Spirit, but prove that he had lost all love for his kindred, or at any rate, so far as to be willing to sacrifice one of his own race rather than theirs.

Perhaps it was a morbid misanthropic hatred of all women. Perhaps it was nature's prompting, that made him desire once more to look upon just such a lovely being as his own child would be if now alive, and then doom her to death, thereby inflicting upon her parents misery equal to his own.

We can guess—none can know—the secret of the moving cause. We see the result—the impulse is hidden forever.

What would we give to read his thoughts during all the long days and weeks that rolled down the eternal steep of time while the expedition was gone.

How the wives, or loved ones of the absent braves, counted the hours of their absence, and lived first upon the excitement and certainty of success; then upon Hope, then Fear, and then when they came not, Despair said, "They are lost."

In the meantime, the sweet sunshine of autumn—such a glorious day as that upon which I first camped on the very spot where all these hopes and fears and excitements had been felt, had passed away, and the Snow Spirit was already fulfilling the prophecy of Me-won-i-toc.

Snow after snow had accumulated, and the surface so crusted over that it was almost sufficient to bear a man upon its surface, but not quite. This rendered traveling almost impracticable, so that if the party had been within a day's march of the village, it would have been difficult to reach it, particularly if encumbered with a female prisoner; as Me-won-i-toc constantly assured every one was the case, and that all were safe and well, but their steps had been too slow, and hence the anger of the Spirit of the white robes and snowy feathers. Still, it was feared that the anger was already so great that the absent ones might perish almost within sight of home. Already the words of the Great Medicine were being fulfilled, for the buffalo could not wallow through the deep-crusted snow, and fell an easy prey to the wolves who came down from the north in packs which fairly blackened the surface.

Finally, after many days of cold and storm, the clouds cleared away and the rays of a warm sun came down with effulgence, melting the surface of the snow into a semi-liquid, which froze into solid ice, by one of those wonderful changes so common to that region, when the thermometer varies ten degrees in as many minutes. It was so sudden and severe a change, that animals were fastened where they lay, and the snow, in places ten feet deep, could be traveled over by men as easily and safely as a frozen lake.

Now Hope, long absent from many hearts, came, and whispered, "look away where the sun is rising, look again when he is overhead, and turn your eyes that way when your shadow stretches far away to the east; perhaps you may see the braves returning."

The first day after the "great ice" every one was busy securing a supply of meat. They had only to watch the course of a pack of wolves, and follow them to where a buffalo was imprisoned in his frozen bed, and fight away the ravenous dogs, and cut up and carry home on hand sleds their booty.

On the second morning a small party, without declaring their intentions, started early and took a bee line toward the rising sun.

They could not be going after meat, for they carried a large package ready dressed, with several extra blankets on a sled, and part of them did not take their guns. They were not after meat, but they were going "on a hunt." It was to hunt their long absent companions. A single Indian who had been the day before some thirty miles away to the east, reported that just as he was starting back, he saw a smoke rising in the woods, which he fancied must be made by their long absent friends. He would have gone near enough to satisfy himself, but between him and the smoke ran one of those deep, almost bottomless mud-bed streams which never freeze. To head this would have been a job that would have carried him far into the night, and perhaps left him a prey for a hungry horde of wolves, which for a change, might prefer to make their supper of Indian instead of buffalo meat. So he came home and reported to three or four others, and they were the party now starting out on this early hunt.

In the afternoon of the second day, the hunters returned. They had been successful. The smoke seen by the hunter, was that of the long gone expedition. The maiden had been captured. The reader must be content to wait a little while before he learns how the capture was effected, and what befel the captive. Perhaps he may learn that she did not perish in the fiery ordeal of human sacrifice. Let us not anticipate.

## CHAPTER V.

It is but a fickle reliance.

The members of the expedition who went away on horseback, had all returned on foot. No horse could force his way through the snow. It was that which had delayed the return, and not the want of success. The journey out had been accomplished rapidly, and the party had been guided directly "by the Great Spirit," to see the girl they had captured, and which they described as the "beautiful bird," and they knew she was the right one, because she was the first seen when they reached the white men's country. They followed her to a lone cabin in the woods, where everything seemed to conspire to favor her abduction. A strange fatality had attended upon all her life. She had arrived in this frontier settlement, from a distant home, the very day that the party of young Meltonewah arrived, and he had first seen her as she rode past his lurking place. He said that the impression upon his mind, when he saw this girl, whose appearance upon horseback was very lovely, almost made him repent of the undertaking to capture and carry her away to a terrible fate, and if he had been alone, would have denied having seen this one and sought another. His companions were in ecstacies, to find that she was all that had been demanded by Me-won-i-toc, to make the offering acceptable.

I said that she had just arrived. I must tell you how and why. She was with friends far from danger, when a near relative solicited her earnestly to accompany him to his new home, then on the frontier, but as he assured her far enough from any hostile Indians.

I tried hard to ascertain the location but found it impossible. From where we then were it was "pe-e-noche." That only signifies a great distance—it might be 200 or 600 miles. The spot was "by-shoze" (close by) the Ohio River, but on which side, or whether the victim was stolen from Ohio, Pennsylvania or Virginia, I never could make out. I only know that she came from somewhere "toward sunrise," and that it was her destiny, in her journey Westward, to march directly toward her fate; toward the funeral pile already to kindle, upon the flames of which a soul will ascend to "the Great Spirit," to satisfy the wicked malice of one of her own race, and the ignorant, and therefore excusable, superstition of a barbarous nation.

The fate of this victim of one superstition, was hastened by another, both wicked and foolish, that prevailed among people who called themselves civilized and christianized; and that to as lamentable a degree as it did among the Indians. I allude to the belief that some persons possess the faculty of foretelling events. The common term is "fortune-telling."

To one of these pests of society, known as "the old witch," this girl applied, to learn whether the contemplated journey would be a prosperous one. So great was her reliance upon this deceitful old hag, that she determined not to start, if the answer proved unfavorable to her question.

As she entered the cabin of the witch, she found her sitting with her back to the door, with her face buried in a man's hat.

Of course she could not see who came to consult her. At least, so thought the applicant, who did not speak before the old woman said: "So, so, here comes one who is going upon a journey, and she wants to know whether the great desire of her heart will be satisfied."

"Why, mother Buck, how in the world did you know who it was, and what I came for?"

"I saw it in this white stone, at the bottom of my hat."

Liar. She had just heard it from a young man who had learned of the intended visit, and had given the witch a dollar to persuade the girl not to go. Witch as she was, she was also a noted "match-maker," and had already, in her mind, made one for this dupe; and therefore determined to act directly contrary to the wishes of her affianced lover. She also knew something of the inquirer's history, and thus answered her question about the journey.

"I can see the whole way in this stone as clear as daylight. It will be very pleasant. You will ride a beautiful gray mare. She is now champing her bit where she stands ready for you to mount. *At the end of your journey you will meet a friend that you have been many years anxious to see.*"

"Oh, shall I? Then I will go certainly." This cunningly contrived unmeaning answer made such a deep impression upon her young mind, that it sustained her in all her long journey and sore trials.

She reached her friend's house in a healthy flow of spirits, but so fatigued that she was ready to retire early, and slept soundly—the balmy sleep of health and innocence.

Like all the new settlers' houses, this was a log cabin. It was composed of two rooms, opening upon a rude porch, without any door between the two. The family slept in a "lean-to" off the room used as a kitchen, sitting-room and dining-room. The visitor occupied the "spare room," in which a rousing fire had been built to make it extra comfortable.

There was a large bed in one corner, which being made after the fashion of log cabins, with the rails of the bedstead fixed into the logs, could not be moved. Fearing that the young lady might sleep cold so far from the fire, the kind-hearted woman made up a bed for her upon a cot, close to the hearth, where she was put to rest after the fashion of the old Dutch settlers of Pennsylvania, between two feather beds.

Every step taken and every movement made about that house that night, was watched by a foe more wily than a fox—by men who had learned to accomplish great purposes by crafty cunning.

When all was still as death, four stout fellows entered the room of that tired sleeper, with no more noise than Death would have made, had he came to claim her then instead of a few weeks later, and one at each corner of the bed lifted it carefully and marched far away into the woods, where one of their number watched their horses, while another one brought up "the beautiful gray mare."

The other four of the party were watching the cabin, and the least movement indicating discovery, would have insured the certain death of every inmate.

Heaven preserved them. No one watched.

Care had been taken to carry the bed and its occupant so far away from the house, that if she should be frightened and scream, she could not be heard. Care had been also taken to gather every article of her dress, and the well packed saddle-bags, all that belonged to her, and not an article beside.

The bed was set down close to the camp-fire and all retired but Meltonewah, who alone could speak the white man's language, which he did in a tone so musical and in words so soft and soothing to the waking sleeper, that she arose and dressed herself as calmly as though in her own chamber, her attendant retiring meanwhile behind a large tree.

The bed was then taken up and carried back and placed exactly where it stood before, after which the party were ready to march, and made twenty miles before daylight. There they stopped to take breakfast quite at their ease, feeling sure that they could not be followed, because a light snow had covered every track they had made.

"The Snow Spirit," Meltonewah said, "smiles upon the red men, and covers their tracks, and makes the young maiden laugh. She is not afraid."

Her conduct was so different from ordinary mortals, and not knowing what other name to call her, they always spoke of her as "the white bird."

She little knew the fearful import of their words when they talked of the Snow Spirit, or why it smiled, nor that she was selected as the victim of a superstitious rite, and therefore she "smiled upon the red men." She smiled because she believed that she had been sent for by "a friend that she been anxious to see for many years."

She smiled, too, because these red men treated her with a deference that was at once flattering to vanity and soothing to fear. Indeed, in spite of all the caution of Me-won-i-toc against the effect of a young maiden's eyes, before three days had elapsed, the heart of young Meltonewah had "softened like wax in the sun." At first his love for this girl prompted him to treat her only as a true lover always treats the object of his affection—with kindness, deference, respect. Before the journey was half over he would gladly have returned her to her friends, but for the hope that he might be able, at the proper moment, to offer to make her his wife with a prospect of success. So they continued their slow and toilsome journey. When the snow became deeper than they had ever seen it before, "the gray mare" was the first to give out, because she was not used to the hard life and hard fare of the woods. Then Meltonewah placed the "white bird" upon his own horse, and walked by her side. At length the whole company were dismounted; not a horse could carry its rider, and afterward, on reaching the sand-hills that border Lake Michigan, they turned the horses loose to care for themselves, and having constructed a comfortable wigwam to shelter their prisoner, set about building a sled to convey her as soon as the snow should harden sufficiently to allow them to proceed. They spent three weeks at this camp, and had made but one or two days' march toward home, when they were observed by the hunter and brought in by the party sent out to the rescue.

Now let us return to the cabin from which the girl had been stolen.

No pen can picture the consternation—the utter amazement of the family, when her absence was discovered, which was not until late in the morning, as she retired very much fatigued, and her friends thought had slept soundly in consequence. The horse was missed first, and circumstances indicated that it must have been stolen. On this account the family were reluctant to awaken the girl, as the news would distress her. They little thought how much more distressing the truth would soon be to them. The breakfast was eaten quietly and the man went away to look for, or make an alarm about the stolen horse. He met one of his neighbors, who had picked up a blanket out of the snow in the road, three miles from the house, in the direction of the route the man and girl had come the evening before, but not on the same trail. This convinced them that the horse had been taken back that way. They did not know that it was a cunning trick of the Indians to throw pursuers off their course. They expected that the tracks of the horse would be followed and the blanket found. After dropping that the horse was ridden into a brook, where the road was much traveled, so that his track would be lost, and then down the bed of the stream to a safe place to turn out to reach the rendezvous.

Satisfied that they had got upon the track of the stolen horse, the men went back to the house to organize pursuit.

They were met at the door by a woman wild with affright, crying, "She is gone, she is gone!"

"I know she is," said her husband, "but we have got the trail and will catch the thief."

He thought of course that his wife alluded to the mare when she said "she is gone." So fully occupied was his mind with the one idea of catching the thief, that he appeared indifferent to his wife's repeated assertions that she was gone—"was murdered—was carried off bodily"—and various incoherent expressions, all of which were used against these people afterward to confirm a horrid suspicion of murder—that this man and wife had induced this girl to visit them, and had then murdered her, because they would then be heirs to a considerable property.

When the situation was fully comprehended, instead of sitting down and calmly calculating causes and effects, and reasoning upon all the circumstances as an Indian would, the wildest conjectures were indulged in, and theories built up to suit these fancies, instead of taking one single fact for a starting point, and then letting others fall into the train in natural order.

Of course there was alarm and commotion in the settlement, and every new comer had a new theory. Some one suggested that the horse had probably strayed and was making way toward its former home. The owner did not know, but upon the whole he believed that the stable door was unfastened.

"Did she stray with the saddle on?" said old Brady.

That settled the question about straying. "No, she must have been stolen."

"Do you think the horse-thief was a woman?"

"Why, no; what makes you say that, Brady?"

"Oh, nothing much; only that two saddles hung together, and the woman's saddle is gone."

This was what may be called a "knock-down argument." Then it was suggested that the girl must have taken a sudden and curious freak into her head to return, and had got up and saddled her own horse and rode off.

"It is a little singular," suggested the imperturbable Brady, "that as she arrived after dark, and did not know where the horse was put, that she was able to find it without a lantern. She must be fond of night work."

So that theory was exploded. The next was somnambulism, which Brady could not answer, "as he was never acquainted with the critter." The only thing certain was that the girl was gone, without leaving a trace of where, why or how.

How could those who mourned over her mysterious disappearance think what had become of her, since the cunning foe had left no trace? A little search was made in the adjoining forest, and old Brady insisted that he discovered "sign" that warranted him in saying the girl had been carried off by Indians. By that time the theory of murder had got so firm a hold upon the minds of the settlers, that they were not willing to give up such a reasonable cause of the mysterious disappearance for one so improbable as abduction by Indians. Horrible as this suspicion was against a neighbor, it had so many believers that Brady found it difficult to organize a party to follow his "sign" until something certain should be discovered.

This "Old Brady" was like old "Leather Stocking," one of Cooper's great characters. He could discover "sign" where no other eyes could see any indication. In this case, cunning and careful as the party had been, and aided as they were by the fall of snow, they left one mark that Brady could read. He found where their ponies had been tied far out in the woods, and to prove that the bushes had not been cropped by "Christian horses," he dug up out of the snow some of their droppings and brought them into the settlement. He asserted that there were ten horses, and that their riders were all tall young men. He found the marks of the ten horses, and knew that the riders were tall, because they reached high to hitch their horses to swinging limbs. The spot was beyond the creek, which they all leaped across. An old man would have ridden over, and probably have hitched his horse to a bush or lower limb on this side.

Brady's theory was considered sound. The droppings certainly showed plain enough that the horses were a small breed, and had lately eaten nothing but browse, which, he said, "no Christian horse could live upon."

That the Indians had been there he was certain. Why, he could not tell. He believed that they had carried off the girl, and swore that he would find and follow their trail unless they flew across Lake Erie, but he could not induce any one to go with him. So he started alone. Some tried to persuade him to give it up. You might as well try to persuade a rock to move, as to get him to change a fixed purpose. In spite of all argument and remonstrance, he "rigged himself for a long hunt," and plunged into the deep wilderness.

It was the tenth day after the abduction that Brady returned. It was the very day that the suspected man was to be examined upon the suspicion that he had "put the girl out of the way," and doubtless he would have been sent to prison, so strong was the feeling against him. Brady changed the whole current. His report was that he had found the trail and followed it to the third camp, which was upon a sandy piece of ground where the snow had blown off, and as they had got so far away safely, the Indians had thrown off their extreme caution and left "sign" that was unmistakable. There he counted ten moccasin tracks and the print of one small shoe, around the camp fire, and he found the strongest proof to his mind that the girl, if she really was involuntarily a prisoner, in her captors' hands, was not treated as the "red devils" usually treat prisoners, for he very plainly saw where a little camp having been carefully made, separate from the others, that extraordinary pains had been taken to make her the softest and warmest bed possible in such a situation. Brady did not learn the cause of all this care, because he did not know that the "Snow Spirit's" eyes had melted a soft spot in Meltonewah's heart.

It was love, the holy and pure spirit that makes this world beautiful, wherever it spreads its fragrance over the earth, that had softened the rigors of captivity. It is a blessed spirit that should dwell with every man and woman who treads God's footstool, for without it, none will ever see his face. It is love that makes the life of civilization delightful; it is love that tames the savage, as well as his more cultivated brother.

Let it be the care of every woman to make herself lovely, by all the winning arts of her sex, until every savage heart, whether in city or forest, may feel the taming influence. Where love prevails crime will cease.

When the old hunter had told his story, producing fact after fact, to prove his case, there were some who seemed still skeptical. The cause of the abduction was beyond their comprehension, and his whole argument went only to convince this class that, if true, the accused party was privy to the wicked deed, and had procured its accomplishment, and that "Brady was no better than the others."

It began, too, to be remembered that Brady had been off on a "long hunt," all the time that the other man had been absent, and that both arrived in the settlement the same night, and the "ten Indians," if they came at all, had also arrived simultaneously.

Like all doubtful cases, this had about an equal number of advocates. The people of the settlement were so strongly divided that some of them felt savage enough to fight for opinion's sake. The Brady party at length so far succeeded, as to induce the others to stay all further proceedings—although they could not allay suspicion, nor stop remarks—until a determined little band of volunteers could go out on the trail and prove or disprove all that the old hunter had asserted.

In the mean time the other party determined to organize a company to watch the suspected family, to see that they did not "escape from justice." They certainly did escape from that, but not from the injustice of slander and foul suspicion.

"The Brady scouts," as they were called, were ready to start early the next morning, and they were prepared for a much longer hunt than going to the "camp three days out." They determined to follow the trail, if it looked plain, quite into the "Indian country," if necessary, to find out the fate of the prisoner. Their resolution was good, but Providence overruled their actions. Aided by Brady's woodscraft, and by taking a straight course, hard riding brought them to "Sandy Creek Camp," the second night. Here they found everything exactly as it had already been described, and, all saw that it would be very easy to follow the trail westward in the morning. So they took their supper with the relish of forest life, and prepared for a good night's sleep.

One man declared that he would occupy the young lady's bed, which another disputed; and in the good-natured scuffle that ensued, they stirred up the leaves and straw, and discovered something white. It proved to be a linen cambric handkerchief. On it there were some words written with a piece of coal. The man who picked it up could not read, and as in duty bound, passed it to "the Cap'en" (Brady), forgetting that he was in the same predicament. There were others who could read and they easily made out these words:

"To my friends on Rocky run. Weep not for me. I am safe and kindly treated, though a prisoner to ten Indians. One is really noble; he speaks English, and treats me like a brother. I was carried out into the woods before I waked. I have my mare, and plenty to eat. She has not—poor thing. This is the third night, and the first that the Indians have all slept. Now I am not watched and can write. Follow me no further. I cannot tell why I am carried off, but I still trust that the words of the old witch will prove true. M. W."

What a fatal delusion. Let me caution every girl who reads this tale, to avoid a fortune-teller as you would all that is unholy. Their counsel leads to sin, shame and death.

It is evident that the captive was a victim in more respects than one. She is a victim to the old witch's delusions; and she is in a fair way to be a victim to the delusion that a "handsome" young Indian could love her only "like a brother;" and she is a victim to the most horrid delusion that ever affects the human mind, the delusion of superstition that demands a human sacrifice.

The finding of that handkerchief, nearly banished sleep from the camp that night. Part of the company were disposed to "follow no further." Others, including Brady, were for pushing on. It was finally determined that two of the party should return with the handkerchief to the settlement, to relieve anxiety and remove all suspicion from the innocent friends of the captive, while the others should go ahead and try to make other discoveries. Then in the last half of the night they gathered their blankets around them, and lay down by their fire and slept so soundly till daylight that no one knew that a foot of light snow had fallen, and thus all chance of following the trail was at an end.

There was now nothing to do, but for the whole party to turn toward home. It was well that they did; for this light fall of snow was only the commencement of one of the longest storms and deepest snows that had ever fallen in the north-western territory.

The party were nearly a week in getting back over the space they rode across when going out, in two days; and it was only by the skill and determined perseverance of old Brady, that the men did not give up and all perish, for many of them seemed determined to go west when they should go east. They had no compass, because the old hunter had always despised such little "tom-foolery trinkets." Nature was his guide. But now for a week without sun, or stars, it was hard for him to make others believe that he knew his course. How could he, with the air constantly filled with snow, that nearly obliterated every landmark. At the start he knew the points of the compass and his course, and he "laid that by the wind." A fickle reliance; but Brady insisted that the wind never changed without a change in the atmosphere or force of the storm; and while that continued steady, he should trust heaven and his own reason. He also declared that all the trees in that region had a general inclination to the south, and although the snow was frequently so thick in the air that it was difficult to determine this inclination, it was not difficult to feel of the boles, and see which side had the most moss, or appeared the roughest, and that side he knew was the north. "So as long as a man knows his right hand from his left, with all this 'sign,' he must be a fool if he can't travel eastward."

Thus he stuck to his "sign" and kept his course, and came out within a mile of where he told his companions he was steering, and great was the rejoicing at their arrival, for they had been almost given up as lost.

It was Sunday morning when the scouts arrived. The snow had ceased falling during the night, and the sun never shone more beautiful upon a white mantled world than it did that morning. It had, apparently, awakened every soul in the settlement to new life and action and to love of devotion. Teams had been out in every direction, breaking paths, and opening up the way for the people to gather at the school-house to hear preaching at twelve o'clock, by one of the missionaries of the wilderness, who, despite the storm, had come to fill his monthly appointment.

The opening hymn had been sung and a chapter read, and then, when the preacher had stood a moment reflecting, he said: "I am desired to ask this congregation to unite with me in earnest prayer for the safety of the men now absent from the setlement. Of the one that they have gone to seek we have no hope of tidings."

Just as he was ready to say, "Let us pray," there was a commotion in the house. Necks were stretched up, and directly three or four of the generally staid members rushed to the door, and then all the people stood up, for they heard the cry of "Brady, Brady—all safe." And then they heard horses' feet, and shouts—and would have seen—if there had been any windows to see through—that there was a curious peering of men at a woman's pocket handkerchief, and they heard one say, "Let's take it to the preacher." Presently there was tramping at the door to beat off the snow, and then all the men came in, and one of them marched right up to the little platform where the preacher stood, the very picture of amazement. The man all the time waving the handkerchief over his head, with as much pride as though it was a banner won in battle. As he handed it to the astonished man, he said; "Read, read it loud."

Never was the busy hum of people hushed more instantly to most intense silence.

The words were read slowly and distinctly, and then the man stated how and where the handkerchief was found.

"Let us continue our worship," said the preacher, "but let us change its form. We will all kneel down here, in the presence of Almighty God, and give Him most earnest thanks that he has removed from our mind all cause for the distressing suspicion that one of our neighbors had been guilty of a dreadful crime. In this we can now all heartily unite.

"Amen, amen, amen," resounded upon all sides, and all joined in that offering up of thanksgiving, with as much unanimity as though it had lifted the load of suspicion from the hearts of all, instead of one of their number.

## CHAPTER VI.

Be patient: you will learn soon enough.

So ended the fruitless search, and active inquiry after the lost one; and save by a few, she was totally forgotten. Of one of these exceptions the reader may yet hear something. The painful remembrance of loss, by that one, was never forgotten; and the story was handed down in family traditions among the children of some of those who were present at that ever memorable meeting in the old log school-house at "Rocky Run." As for the fate of the girl, I was, probably, the first white man who learned it; and I intend in due time to give it to the reader. First, let us leap at one bound over all the space that she traversed in her long, tiresome journey, from near the Ohio River to the head of Lake Michigan. What a wild waste it was then, only about 80 years ago. What a teeming region it is now. Thirty years later than the period when I have supposed this alarming abduction by Indians to have taken place, the State of Ohio was the theater of some terrible battles with that race, as the bones of many soldiers in the Maumee fully attest.

Now all the country, traversed by that war party, is filled with cities, towns, villages, churches, mills, shops, farms, roads, and hourly trains of cars traversing the iron belts; and the Indians—where are they?

The region that I have described, where I first met old Shobonier and his tribe, had scarcely ever been seen by the eyes of a white man, when first visited by Me-won-i-toc, as it was out of the track of the early French explorers, who landed at Chicago, and went down the Illinois River to the Mississippi. It was, probably, because it was never visited by any of his own race, that Me-won-i-toc had chosen it for his residence; for there he could practice his devilish arts unmolested.

The shores of Lake Michigan, as viewed from the lake, are most forbidding. Scrubby trees, sand hills and morasses, constitute the landscape. There is nothing attractive to the eye, unless it delights in a wild waste of sterility. The fertile, beautiful country that I have spoken of, lies back of these wooded ridges. Me-won-i-toc's cabin, was close on the border of one of the loveliest of prairies, with the sand hills adjoining, for an inexhaustible hunting ground. If he wished to hide away from the people at any time, he had only to put his seal upon his cabin, and make an hour's march toward the lake, and he could find solitude in all its charms. I have seen the sand drifting there many times higher than I ever saw a drift of snow. Sometimes tall pines are covered, and sometimes those which have been entombed for ages, are exhumed by the action of the wind. Sometimes it scoops out basins deeper than they are wide, and the action that effected the excavation having ceased, the bottom and sides grow over with bushes, forming a curious and safe retreat.

Me-won-i-toc intended to have had the grand ceremony of wickedness in one of these basins, thinking that he could make it more solenly impressive, by getting all the people where the glare of the blazing fire would light up their countenances, as they stood in a circle around and above the altar.

The effect, upon his audience, undoubtedly would have been very dramatic, but the snow prevented this part of his work, burying altar and fuel at the bottom of a sort of dell, which is more than a hundred feet deep.

Of course the arch conjurer could not light the fire there which was to destroy one of his own race, that her blood might cement his power over the Indians. But when I first visited the spot, it is fortunate that I could kindle one, else I should not now be alive to tell you this story about the capture and death of the victim of that wicked man.

If my readers will pardon the digression, I will tell of that visit, before I tell the fate of the captive, and how and why I kindled a fire upon a spot where Me-won-i-toc designed to offer what he called an "acceptable sacrifice to the Snow Spirit."

Be patient, reader, and you shall learn soon enough how Meltonewah prospered in his love for, and what became of, the "White Swan."

Those who remember "the fire of 1835 in New-York," have also a vivid recollection that it occurred upon one of the coldest nights of the year. The day preceding it was sunny and pleasant, and I started with old Shobonier to visit that curious dell, which he had often described to me, and which he was sure no white man beside Me-won-i-toc, had ever seen, owing to its situation being so difficult of approach. On the side next Lake Michigan, there was about a mile of steep drifting sand hills, which made the basin almost inaccessible from that direction, to say nothing of the dangers in descending that side of the excavation. On the other side, there was a narrow opening, which had probably been cut by the overflow of water, when a great drift of snow melted. This outlet opened directly into a small lake, which covered a hundred acres or more, and cut off all access except when the water was frozen, which was not often, owing to warm springs and its sheltered situation. Indeed, one spring had its head in the very bottom of the basin, where water never froze. There were three narrow terraces up the sides of the cave, which had the appearance of having been leveled for the purpose of holding people to witness a spectacle upon the little plat of smooth, dry ground at the bottom, which was not over fifty feet in diameter, and when I saw it, sustained a single pine tree, of great size, the top of which was just on a level with the rim of the hollow, and united so with bushes growing there as almost to obscure the light of the sun, which was only visible at noonday. Since the basin had been formed, several pines had grown and fallen down, or else they had grown in a former age, and had been uncovered by the wind, and then fallen, so that fuel was abundant, or might be to a good wood-cutter. Nearly all that could be broken up or chopped easily with dull tomahawks, had been consumed by the Indians who had visited "Me-won-i-toc's den."

The time that Shobonier and I started, was a bright Winter afternoon; my aged Indian friend mounted upon my fleet horse, a well-built, coal-black gelding, whose proud carriage always imparted life to his rider. I had never seen the old man mounted, except upon his little shaggy pony, and I was surprised to see how much a fine horse added to his native dignity. He was indeed a noble-looking Indian. We were well provided with everything necessary to make a night in the woods comfortable, and expected to reach the den and pitch our camp before sundown. In this we were disappointed, in consequence of finding a deep stream unexpectedly open, so that we could not cross upon the ice. This caused a detour of ten miles, and made it dark before we reached the little lake that formed the portal of our lodging-place.

Shobonier proposed to camp upon the south side; and defer our visit till morning, for it would be intensely dark as soon as we entered the gorge, and we should have to ride directly in the bed of the little run, and that was obstructed by some old logs.

It is often well to follow the counsel of the aged, if it does come from an old Indian. It would have been well for me if I had followed it upon the present occasion. But that was "thirty years ago," and I was less wise, less prudent, or less inclined to be guided, than I should be now, after riper experience.

Beside, the situation where we were, was bleak and cold, and I knew that the old man needed shelter, for he was probably nearly eighty years old, though still vigorous, and sat his horse "as straight as an Indian."

But the strongest motive to urge me forward was the glowing account that had been given me of the appearance of the place when lighted up by a bright camp fire. I was just a trifle romantic, "thirty years ago." It is possible it was that instead of the bleakness of the spot where Shobonier proposed to camp, that induced me to cross the lake. By this time it had become very cold, and the strong north wind tumbled the waves of Lake Michigan upon the shore of ice so heavily, that I could almost fancy I felt the chill where we stood, although screened by the high wall of sand hills, and I was not disposed to stop to hear his arguments, however wise and prudent, in favor of camping. So I said, "come ahead," and pushed on to the ice, which looked very strong; but I observed, as I neared the hills, that it appeared to be quite glary and of newer formation, though I had no doubt about its strength. Shobonier had, and held back, so that we should not be near together. We had both dismounted, and I was probably within about fifty feet of the shore, when half a dozen deer, that had taken shelter in the dell, burst out with such a sudden rush, a little in advance of our horses that they took fright, and the one that the old man was leading wheeled and refused to move in any direction. That proved fatal. The newly formed ice, which bore us while moving, gave way as soon as the horse stopped, and down he went, making a hole just big enough for his body, while his head rested upon the ice. I think I never heard such a scream as the frightened brute gave at the moment he plunged into the ice-bath. That excited my horse, and made him turn to see what was the matter, and down he went, and I with him; but fortunately where the water was so shallow that neither was in danger of drowning. The old man left his horse and hastened to my assistance, which I much needed.

His first thought was for the box of friction matches in my overcoat pocket. Lucky thought, for in one minute after it would have been too late. As it was, the box was already dampened. By desperate efforts, assisted by a pole held by my friend on shore, I succeeded in breaking down the ice and getting myself and horse out of our uncomfortable situation, but not before I was so exhausted with labor, and chilled by the water and ice, that I had barely strength to drag my wet clothes through the passage to the shelter that we had been so long anxious to find. The other horse we were obliged to abandon to his fate, and to endure the torture of his cries for help, which continued far into the night. His mate moved up and down the little space that he could walk between the hill and lake, all night, watching the struggles and answering the calls of the dying one. Several times this animal, which we call dumb, came to beg his master to go to the poor brute's assistance.

Alas, the master was in no condition to render aid to others. It was the most terrible night in all my experience of frontier life. For a month afterward, sleeping or waking, I did not lose the sound of the heart-rending cries that filled the air that night. I have never heard anything so like the cries of human fear and anguish.

The first care of Shobonier after we reached the bottom of the dell, black with cavernous darkness, was to feel around for something to light a fire. I was already so chilled that I could not stand. Our horses were packed, mine with a bag of corn for their feed, his with provision for ourselves; including for such an emergency or accident as getting wet, or very much chilled, a small flask of brandy. In the same bag were two hatchets.

The old man, with an instinct that grows sharp in such a life, sprang for this bag as the horse was sinking, but it glided from his benumbed and mittened hand, and went to the bottom of the lake. I fished it out through a hole in the ice a month later. The flask, bag and bottle were still in good order. The bread and meat were very much water soaked. So was the saddle, but I dried it.

We needed the hatchets to get fuel more than anything else, though we came very near not wanting them, for we found only two matches in the whole box that would ignite. The little blaze that we did get started, saved my life. In half an hour, my "friend in need," had a fire and a wigwam. It was a wonder to me to see how he accomplished this with such a scarcity of materials. There was but one stick to be found long enough for a pole. So he tied two short ones to our guns, and those with the pole that he had used to help me out of the ice, lashed together, formed a triangle. Some shorter sticks and brush filled in between the legs, and then our wet blankets and my cloak fastened around, made a tent, which though rather small for two, was the sooner warmed by a very little fire. Then, according to Indian custom, I pulled off my wettest clothing and hung the articles up in the smoke, and kept my naked limbs warm by constant rubbing and roasting. By and by we both grew hungry, and then how I longed for that bag of provisions. The only substitute was the bag of corn, which Shobonier went down to the lake and brought up, and roasted some grains in the ashes. I never ate anything that tasted sweeter.

About daylight I found my clothes dry enough to put on, and soon after I fell asleep. My last vision of my companion represented him crouched over the fire, pipe in mouth, only occupying about as much room in the tent as would a moderate sized dog.

When I awoke he was gone, and so was his gun; its place had been supplied by three shorter sticks, lashed together by the saddle girths and stirrup leathers. The live horse was quietly eating by the spring. The drowned one was still forever. The wind over on the beach howled terribly. I began to dread having to encounter it. Yet by that route would be the quickest way to get food. The dry corn had made my teeth sore. I thought a little roasted venison would relish exceedingly well for breakfast, and I set about gathering wood to replenish the fire, under the vague notion that I should soon see old Shobonier return with a back load. I wondered if his eye was still keen enough to range the sights of a rifle, and whether that trembling hand could hold it steady. I had not long to wait and wonder, for I soon heard his shot, and almost on the instant, a deer came over the crest of the basin, scrambling to the bottom in a death struggle. How can any of my readers conceive the delight of that breakfast. To add to its relish, I found that a little tin box of salt and pepper, had proved water-tight in my coat pocket.

When our appetites and curiosity were fully satisfied, we began to make preparations to saddle up and "ride and tie" toward home. Upon looking about we found that our live horse, for immediate use, might as well have been with the dead one. He had scrambled along the hill-side by the shore of the little lake and disappeared. We decided not to hunt for him, but to hang our meat, and pack our baggage, and take a near cut "across the big marsh," for home, thinking that the horse was probably bound for the same place. In this we miscalculated. He had too much Indian in him to return to a life of toil. He preferred freedom and the woods, and had his fill of it for several weeks. He was glad enough to see me when I found him at the bottom of one of those basins in the sand hills, which he had taken for a stable. He had found pretty good pasturage, for Winter, among the hills.

We are now ready to return to that region of unsurpassed beauty, the groves and prairies alternating, which abounds all around the head of Lake Michigan, outside of the sand hill border. It is a country not only of natural beauty, but of great fertility. It is capable of furnishing a great surplus of food to the more densely peopled region of the Eastern States. When we consider this, we are reconciled to some little injustice that was practiced toward a race who tolerated human sacrifices, to appease some imaginary deity, such as I am now ready to describe.

I am not sorry, certainly, that the buffalo have been exterminated from that rich farming region, whether by the fiat of "the Great Snow Spirit," or by those who hunted the life and feasted upon their flesh. The land is now appropriated to a better purpose than an Indian hunting ground. It furnishes food for civilization, instead of savage life.

I am not sorry to know that the ashes of the sacrificial fires once kindled in some of those sweet groves, have been scattered over the surface of the broad prairie, though it has pained me to see the graves of a nation desecrated by the plow of another people, who care nothing for their silent tenants, nor ever thought how many happy hearths one of those village sites might have once contained. Perhaps many of those that lie "moldering in the ground," in the burial spot described in the opening chapter of this story, and whose graves I saw revered, "even unto the third generation," had as fond and feeling hearts as mine. Then why should not I feel sad to see the plow turning their bones up to light, to be scoffed at by their "white brothers," who cry out "here comes another dead Indian." How recklessly those who notice human remains only with such words, kick them out of the way, or trample them under foot. I have often seen the Indian burial places torn open from curiosity or cupidity. Sometimes a rusty tomahawk or a brass kettle is found; seldom anything more valuable.

When the red men witness how ruthless the whites are towards all that they hold sacred, is it to be wondered that they are ruthless to us.

"Thirty years ago," I said, they will show us that they still remember wrongs, if they are concentrated on the west shore of the Mississippi, where they can unite and feel strong enough to strike. I lived to see that opinion verified in 1862, '63 and '64. It is true, I believe, that they were incited to the deeds of blood by vicious white men. It only proves that Me-won-i-toc was not a solitary instance of one of his race obtaining almost unlimited power over Indians.

Nor was the fate of the poor girl, whom he doomed to death by fire, as awful as that of some victims of savage cruelty, and lust in Minnesota. Before you condemn, let us ask what we as a nation have ever done to make the red men better. If they were guilty of sacrifice to "strange gods," what do we sacrifice to the Living One?

It is true our skins are white. Are our hearts equally free of dark stains? We have driven the Indians away, because we could not make them slaves. Can we say that of the negro? Me-won-i-toc doomed an innocent white girl to death. To what more cruel fate have other white men doomed girls by the thousand, where men and women are bought and sold like cattle.

Let us rest here and thank heaven that buying and selling men and women in America, is as effectually wiped out as are all the marks of Me-won-i-toc's village. Both are trodden under the heel of advancing civilization.

## CHAPTER VII.

**What horrid monster is this coming in his frightful costume, and midnight approaching?**

Now, after all this wandering, let us return to old Me-won-i-toc's village, and listen to the sad finale of this tragedy.

It was in the afternoon of a pleasant Winter day, when the party of young Meltonewah arrived; all with light hearts, except himself. His he likened unto a burned stone. It was black and heavy. His love for the "Snow Bird" had ripened into that pure affection that enables one to sacrifice all of self for its object. As for conjugal affinity between him and his idol, how could he hope for it? He a wild savage—a red man; she young, pure, innocent, white; the very perfection of civilization in another race. During their long journey, it is true, he had felt the sunshine of her eyes; but instead of exciting passions common to uncultivated natures, it had produced a happy, holy feeling, which made him resolve to rescue her from her fate, at whatever risk. He dared not tell her what that fate was. He simply told her to remain firm, under all trials, and rely upon him. And she did. She never relinquished the hope of returning to her friends; and Meltonewah assured her that that hope should be satisfied. She told him something of her history, and finally acknowledged that she had left one among her kin who loved her better than all the world beside, but no better than he was beloved in return.

Noble Meltonewah! Savage, to be sure, but noble; for he vowed, with all the solemnity that his untutored mind was capable of feeling, that he would restore this maiden to her home and to her lover. He knew of but one way to do it, but that way had always been respected by his people. True, it would countervail all that he had done in behalf of the "great sacrifice," that the people had been made to believe neccessary to prevent the destruction of the buffalo. Already the mind of this young man was breaking the slavish bonds of superstition. He had begun to reason. His conversation with the selected victim of the horrid rite, about to be performed, if it had "softened his heart," had also opened his eyes. He had many times asked himself this question:

"What possible effect can the death of this girl have upon the clouds? Will the smoke of her burning flesh ascend to the sky, and stop the snow? Will the Great Snow Spirit snuff up the odor of the fire and laugh?"

And finally he said, in the spirit of a good man that dwelt within him: "Shall this vagabond white man, with his villainous tricks, and cheating jugglery, domineer over my father's people any longer? Already has he 'put aside' two of our best young men, who opposed him, and now he would doom this maiden—one of his own people, too—to the most terrible torture. He shall not. Villain! I, Meltonewah, doom thee to death."

In that mood he arrived; and it was not a mood for receiving the noisy congratulations that the whole village were ready to bestow. He allowed his companions to receive his share as chief, as well as their own, and hastened to his mother's wigwam, and asked for a draught only taken in case of desperate sickness.

The "Snow Bird" was conducted to a wigwam already prepared for her, where she was to be arrayed in white "ascension robes." She was also to be fed with the choicest food, for that very night, at 12 o'clock, her funeral pile was to be lighted. She received all the attentions offered her with serenity and smiles, being more and more convinced that it was all a preparation to meet "a long absent friend."

It is true that she did sometimes wonder if these were her bridal robes, and once she inquired after Meltonewah. She was told that he was in his wigwam, preparing for the great feast, and then she gave a little shudder, as a fear crossed her mind that she was, after all, destined to be his wife. "But," she said, "I will trust him. He has promised that I shall return to the East as soon as the snow melts. I cannot believe that Meltonewah can lie."

Me-won-i-toc refused to see the victim, or any one else, though he required the minutest particulars, and from what he heard he was satisfied what was the sickness that afflicted Meltonewah. He hoped to be able to make a case against him, that would enable him to put him out of the way. His knowledge of the white man's language, which Me-won-i-toc had taught him, had enabled him to learn too much. He already endangered the magician's power. He, therefore, during the hours of preparation for the sacrifice, which others devoted to inordinate eating, kept himself apart, studying how he could most surely maintain his ascendancy, and how he should thwart the young warrior who evidently had taken such a deep interest in the poor, friendless white girl.

Friendless, indeed, except the single champion whose intention of rescue was already suspected by the arch fiend who had plotted her destruction, and he was thus prepared to mature plans to prevent any interference.

The captive, whatever she suspected of the fate awaiting her, still evinced the same sweet calmness that she had from the first: "Why," thought she, should I struggle and cry out against what I cannot prevent, whether it prove good or bad?" It is no wonder that she had "softened the heart" of Meltonewah; for, beside the beauty of her conduct and musical words, her buoyant spirits, good health, fine form, handsome face, were all winning, and won the Indian's love.

All this, however, instead of softening the heart of the wretch who had ordered her capture, was used as proof positive of the direct interposition of the good Manitou, to furnish an acceptable sacrifice.

In the course of the evening Me-won-i-toc called three of his most trusty counselors, to suggest the necessity of having Meltonewah confined, so that he could not, if he would, disturb the solemn ceremony; "Because," he said, "the least interference would provoke the Manitou's wrath, so that the sacrifice would have no effect to prevent the grand catastrophe it was to avert." This, undoubtedly, was to guard against the accident of failure, as he could then charge it to this interference. Me-won-i-toc proposed that Meltonewah should be brought into his cabin, where he would exorcise the evil spirit from his body. The counselors, remembered that in two or three similar cases neither body nor spirit ever appeared again in the village, and as Meltonewah was a general favorite, and entitled to the office of principal chief, as soon as his old father should die, they did not readily consent to trust the young man in the hands of the Great Medicine alone in the mysterious solitude of his cabin.

The counselors were opposed to any measures toward Meltonewah that would give his party an excuse to organize an opposition to the Great Medicine, "As it might have the effect of defeating him and stopping the great sacrifice to the Snow Spirit."

It was well known to all, that by the law of universal custom of the nation any one could rescue a prisoner from death by openly claiming the victim as wife, husband, or child. That law was unalterable, and therefore the person thus claimed became one of the tribe and filled the position to which he or she had been adopted, as fully as though wooed or born to the place.

The counselors assured the Great Medicine "that he need have no fear upon this head; that Meltonewah was very sick; that he had taken 'the black draught,' and was now utterly insensible, lying like one already dead, in his wigwam."

This fact Me-won-i-toc used to impress the Indians "that the good Manitou had taken special charge of all their affairs, and had not only guided the party to the only spot in the country, toward the sunrise, where they could have obtained a perfectly beautiful maiden, but had brought them all safe on their return, exactly as he had predicted; and now had stricken down with deathly sickness the only one of the party who had dared to look upon such a holy object with longing eyes.

Thus, all fears and suspicions being quieted, the grand saturnalia progressed toward its fatal termination. Nothing seemed possible to avert the awful doom of this victim of superstition and wickedness.

If her executioner could have seen her face, only for a moment, his heart, as well as Meltonewah's, might have softened. To prevent the possibility of such a thing, he came out in his snow robes, with his white owl hood drawn down over his eyes, so that he saw nothing but the snow upon which he trod.

Midnight now approached. The crowd were satiated with feasting. The great pile of dry pine wood and grass, ready to light with a touch and burn like a flash, was all ready placed in a circle around the altar.

Of all the inhabitants of the village only three were absent from the circle when the great conductor of these hellish rites came out of his cabin. Two were with the doomed girl. The third was Meltonewah.

The first ceremony was to light the great council pipe, by the mysterious fire, which came from the center of a stone. This was a contrivance of Me-won-i-toc, and, although mysterious to the Indians, was produced by suddenly pushing a piston into a smooth hole in a stone, the compression of air igniting a piece of punk. With this the pipe was lighted and passed around the circle for all the principal men to take a puff. It was equivalent to taking an oath not to interfere with the ceremony of the sacrifice. There was one man who had not smoked the holy fire. He was "sick in his wigwam." He was suffering the slow torture of suspense. Sick he was; sick at heart, but not insensible from the "black draught;" that he had poured upon the ground. His sickness was one of expediency. He will recover soon.

When the pipe had gone its round and come back to Me-won-i-toc, he emptied the fire upon some dry substance, which, kindling into a flame, was the sacred fire which would light the heavens with one of the most fearful death scenes ever witnessed, even among barbarians.

Then the Great Medicine spoke: "Let the White Swan, which the young men found upon the banks of the beautiful river, be brought into the light of the council fire."

Directly he was answered by one of the counselors: "Brother, she is here. White as the snow, and as pure; sweet as the water lily, she blushes like the rose that blooms on the prairie, when the Snow Spirit is no longer angry. She is as innocent and lively as a fawn; her robes are all white; her skin, which has never been seen nor touched by man, is ready to be touched by the flame."

If the victim had understood this language, she would have shuddered now, for the first time, at this allusion to fire. Happily she did not, but she wondered at this great preparation of fuel.

Perhaps she thought it was for a grand illumination of her wedding with Meltonewah, which she was now convinced was to be celebrated. Well, it might be, but that did not alarm her. She was satisfied that she should never be his wife, whatever the ceremony, still relying upon his honor, though she looked around anxiously to catch a glimpse of his keen eye. She could count all of his companions, but could not see him. What could mean all the things before her—the preparations and people—all but one. What was the meaning of her own snow-white robes, and those of the horrid object before her, with his great owl cap, coming down to his long white beard, and hiding his features. She tried to divine the meaning of all she saw. Who and what was that man? Was he the priest who is to perform the ceremony? How her brain did whirl. Then the White Owl seemed to speak. Its voice was not that of one she had often dreamed about. It is harsh and gutteral. It said:

"The young men have done well, though their steps have been slow. The Snow Spirit will be satisfied, provided the White Swan's eyes have not pierced any of their hearts. What say these braves? Are their hearts all sound? If not, the Manitou will be angry. Indeed he is angry now. Look at the snow. Already the buffalo are dying. The food which the great Manitou gives his red children is perishing. Let us make him a great offering. It must be done in silence. Let no one speak nor think of the White Swan, while she is burning. Think of the wolf. He pursueth the buffalo. The wolf loves blood——"

"So does Me-won-i-toc!"

The White Owl trembled with fear and rage. It was the voice of young Meltonewah, who had approached unnoticed as unexpected. His eyes flashed fire, and inspired the White Swan with hope. The young chief continued:

"Me-won-i-toc is worse than a wolf. He would drink the blood of his white sister. It is no wonder that the Snow Spirit is angry with people who harbor such a monster. Will they let him spill this maiden's blood upon the white snow."

Meltonewah was angry and excited. His antagonist was calm. He felt that the trial time of his power had come. He replied, without showing what was working in his heart:

"The pile is large. It will burn quick. The strong fire will drink up the blood. My brother's eyes will not be pained at its sight. It will not be seen upon the white snow. Has the young warrior's heart turned white? When the fire is done burning he will be cured. He is sick now."

"Will the fire melt all this snow? The Great Medicine, while in his warm cabin, has not seen how much has fallen. If he had slept upon it, as my braves have for a whole moon, he would have felt its chill, and know that he could not melt it with a little fire. The buffalo will perish. It is now too late."

"Then it is your fault, and the curse of all these people be upon your head. If you had not dallied by the way, it would not have been too late. The white maiden has poured oil into this young warrior's ears. Take him away: his heart is so soft, the heat of the fire will melt it like wax. The White Swan will soon sing her last notes, which must not be mixed with the sobs of a buffalo calf."

This bitter taunt would have been Me-won-i-toc's last words, if the young tiger that was about to pounce upon him, knife in hand, had not been forcibly restrained by some of the old men. Several of the young men were evidently inclined to take his part. He spoke; "Why should we trust this white man any longer? He is false to his own people; he will be false to us. If my heart is white, his is black, and his tongue is forked. He lies when he says that the blood of the White Swan will appease the anger of the Snow Spirit. If the buffalo must be destroyed so that the red men cannot live here upon the flowery plains near the rising sun, then we will go where he sets; but let us go with clean hands. Else the good Manitou will surely be angry, and the wolf's tongue will not only lap the blood of the buffalo, but his jaws will craunch the bones of our children and young maidens, who will perish for want of food that our young men cannot furnish when the Manitou drives away all of the red man's cattle. The White Medicine is no longer great. His words are like those of all the pale faces who come among the red men. Our fathers have always told us they are nothing but lies. He would make you believe that the good Mannitou, who preserved me and my companions in the great snow, and brought us safely back to you, with the White Swan, is like a dog, who howls when he smells burnt blood. My fathers! let this maiden live, and the good Manitou will let us live and find food, where the bones of your fathers are buried upon yonder hillside. If you permit this pale-faced enemy of our race to do this hellish deed, we shall be swept out of our hunting grounds, as we deserve to be, by white squaws with brooms. I have seen how rapidly they are coming this way. I have counted them. You have felt the power of their great war chiefs. It is time to make peace. Sacrifice this girl, and you will make war and die. It must not be. Meltonewah speaks words of truth. Did he ever speak lies to his father? Meltonewah will save his people from destruction. The White Swan shall be Meltonewah's wife. It is the custom of our nation. She is our prisoner, though she was not fairly captured in war. She was stolen from her own fireside, while she slept. Fathers, brothers, I claim her. Meltonewah has spoken. I have said enough."

The assemblage heard with a commotion that was increased by the death-like silence which prevailed while it had hung upon the glowing words that this red-skinned nobleman had poured forth. In one moment the scepter of the magician would have been broken beyond his art of repairing. It was like all we know of human nature, for him to struggle to retain his sway. A desperate effort must be made. For one moment he raised his hood, and looked around, without speaking. All eyes followed his, and the noise instantly subsided. Another period of death-like silence had followed. No one until now had observed that all the stars had "gone out," and that a snow-storm had commenced. A terrific-looking black cloud hung over Lake Michigan. Before Me-won-i-toc had finished his gaze, brief as it was, the wind howled, terrible to every ear there, as it was to mine the night that I spent in that conjuror's den. I was sheltered; they were not. The day and evening had been comparatively warm. The wind from the north came in such a furious blast, it seemed to chill every one to the heart. Many of the women and children, and some of the men, would have gladly run to the shelter of their wigwams, but they dared not stir. Me-won-i-toc held them by his magnetic spell. No serpent ever had greater power over the birds that he charmed to destruction than this man had over these people. Even those who neither feared nor respected his arts nor mummery, stood equally in awe with those who really believed that he possessed the ability, by a wave of his hand, to call up the north wind, and bring down a shower of snow from a sky that was shortly before filled with bright stars.

Every resident in the section of country where this scene transpired has witnessed just such transitions from cloudless sky to tempest, and knows that it is nothing contrary to nature. The superstitious minds that the arch conjuror, whom I have described, controlled, were not versed in the phenomena of storms.

After he thought he had sufficiently wrought upon those minds by his silence and gesticulations, he spoke:

"The stars have gone out. The Great Bear [the figure for the north wind] has opened his mouth. He spits his teeth upon the heads of those who offend him. They do not believe that the Snow Spirit is angry; that the buffalo will perish. Hark! the wolves howl. They are glad. My brother has said truly, 'The wolves will craunch the bones of the red children.' Let the wolf come. They beckon for him. They will not offer the sacrifice that will appease his anger. They would give the White Swan to a man who was once a brave. Look! he has gone mad. Did he not come to us very sick, and drink the black draught? Has it produced the usual effect? No. But while he slept in his wigwam, the little black Manitou has crept into his heart. He claims the White Swan as his wife. No wonder that the Snow Spirit is angry. Do you hear how the Great Bear growls? You say that this white girl is lovely; the most lovely of all her race. My eyes have not seen her. Meltonewah's have, and his ears have heard her song. Ours have heard what effect it has had upon our sick brother. It has made him mad. Take him away to my cabin. When the sacrifice is over, I will cure him. He cannot claim this maiden as his wife. His own words prove it, for he says "she is not a captive of war." She is not of this earth. She is one that was sent to us by the good Manitou. She had no father—no brothers, to fight for her. Did any of them follow our young men! They will never make war upon us for her. She belongs to the Spirit land. It is our business to send her on her journey. You will see her rise like a bird, and then the snow will cease. You tell me that she has not pined during her long journey, nor felt the chill of the snow. Could one of the white race bear all this Did a great war chief ever marry one from the Spirit land? His madness would bring ruin upon all his people. Take him away, and let the door of my cabin be fastened upon him."

The tide had again turned. Superstition overpowered reason. In an instant after Me-won-i-toc had done speaking, Meltonewah's arms were pinioned behind him, and he was thrust into his jail, securely bound. His knife, according to Indian custom, had been taken from him at the first. If it had not what would be its use now? He could not, with his fastened hands, draw it from its sheath and cut the thongs. The knife, then, could not serve him. Something must, and that on the instant. Light from the fire shone into the cabin through the little hole used by Me-won-i-toc to speak with persons on the outside. It gleamed upon something in the opposite wall. It was Me-won-i-toc's dagger; the same one that he held in his hand at the time that he suspended the bloody tommahawk over his wife's head. If she or her seducer had waked, the long bright blade would have been dimmed with blood.

Tiger never sprang quicker upon its prey than Meltonewah did toward this keen blade. Turning his back to it, the thongs that bound his hands were severed instantly, and the next instant she pulled the weapon from its place, and, wrapping it in a piece of buckskin, thrust it into his girdle.

What next! The door is fast; the walls are firm. The roof is made of strong timbers and earth. The aperture for smoke is too small to give him egress. Yet he feels that he *must* get out. There is not a moment to spare. He had long believed that Me-won-i-toc had a secret passage. Where is it? Not in sight. Upon the ground in one corner there is a bed. He tore it up from the ground; lifted a broad slab, and felt, rather than saw, a hole, and jumped into it, and began crawling, he knew not where; yet he breathed freely, for he hoped.

When Me-won-i-toc's victim saw, for she did not understand, that he had ordered Meltonewah seized, her heart turned to ice. His utmost of torture, with knives and fire and savage hands, could not have hurt her more. She thought his confinement was in some way connected with her. This she understood by the "sign language," if she interpreted it aright. At that moment the glorious nature of woman shone out brighter than the sun at noonday, and she cried out:

"Oh, bring him back, bring him back. I will be his wife. I never will ask to return to my kindred. He shall be all the world to me, if I can save his life."

Me-won-i-toc understood these words, and trembled. What would be their effect upon the chiefs and head men? For the instant he forgot that they could not understand her language. He hastened to put it beyond all power to counteract his determination to accomplish this sacrifice, both to gratify his lust for power, and his hatred to one who had opposed and nearly overthrown it. He instantly ordered the victim bound to the stake with thongs of raw buffalo hide, which would not burn off too soon.

Now the dreadful truth first dawned upon the poor girl's mind, and she moaned and prayed and called upon Meltonewah to save her from this dreadful fate.

"How can he," thought Me-won-i-toc, "yet he can hear and understand her call." And he gloated over his agony.

Now the opening into the circle of fuel, through which the victim was led to the altar, is closed, and Me-won-i-toc waves the torch over his head, that is about to light the great pile of dry fuel. He waits a moment, because he believes the imprisoned young chief is looking out upon the scene, and the wretch delights to contemplate his agony.

What devil tempted that wicked man at this moment to uncover his eyes, that he might once more, and for the last time, look upon a face as lovely as the one he loved and lost.

He raised his cowl, and gazed. It was he who felt the agony now. His eyes fairly swelled in their sockets with pain at what he saw. His lips quiver and try to speak. The torch trembles in his hand, but is not applied. What vision appals the Great White Medicine? Has he, too, gone mad? Yes, almost, for the image of the face just called up from the grave is before him: "It is, oh God of Mercy, whom I have reviled, it is my own child, Sidney!"

Flinging down the torch and seizing his knife, he leaped into the circle and cut the thongs. The girl had fainted as soon as she heard him speak these words, and her own name.

He still thought that he might be deceived in the vision of the face that has appeared before him. It might be some strange resemblance; or some fantasy of the imagination. It is his own brain, and not the funeral pile, that seems on fire. Oh, how it rages. It must be quenched. or it will be consumed. There is but one way.

The girl did not answer to her name as he expected. But there is one means by which he can know the truth. Hastily, almost with savage haste, he severed the fastenings of the loose robes in which she had been attired, and as they fell from her shoulders, there, there, like ome horrid specter just revealed to his sight, in its right colors upon her snowy skin, was the figure of he bloody tomahawk.

His savage nature, wich he had nursed for many years, melted under such a trial. He pressed his inanimate child firmly in his arms, covering her under his own broad mantle, as though he would hide her from all other eyes, and shield from the cold wind. Now a frenzied father is struggling to save a daughter that he has doomed to a horrid fate, and one which he is in danger of sharing; for that circle of dry pine will soon be a circle of fire, from which no mortal can escape.

When Me-won-i-toc recognized his daughter, whom he had so unwittingly ordered bound to the stake, caring not though she was another's very, very dear child, he threw down his torch, and that had been hurled by the wind to the very spot he had himself prepared for applying and giving the blaze instant effect. Yet, when all saw that he must be consumed, no one sought to stop the rapidly kindling flame; for all were wild with fright, or wonder at the singular and unaccountable conduct of the strange being before them.

It was at this moment that the flat stone that formed the hearth of the altar was pushed upward, as though lifted by a volcano, and there stood Meltonewah! Before him was the bitterest enemy he had on earth. He saw nothing else—thought of nothing else. Yes, he thought of Me-won-i-toc's dagger. It flew from his belt—flashing suddenly in the bright light one moment before the people's eyes, and then was sheathed—sheathed in its owner's heart. Alas! that the avenger's arm was so strong. The long, sharp blade passed clear through the father's body and pierced the heart of the daughter.

She uttered no cry; perhaps never knew who struck the blow that sent her so suddenly to the Spirit land; but she saw and recognized Meltonewah; and if she knew she died by his hand, that look told him he was forgiven, it was so pure and sweet.

In a moment he comprehended all he had done in his blind rage—he saw at a glance the same mark that had assured Me-won-i-toc who she was, and instantly knew that he had killed father and daughter by the same blow. Then his heart surely was like wax—it was melting within his body, which he cared no longer to preserve.

He stooped down and lifted the White Swan in his arms, while her eyes were closing in death, still looking into his with an expression of pure and holy love. For a moment his senses were all absorbed. Then he heard shouts all around, louder than the roaring wind or blazing fire; then he distinguished these words:

"Fly! Meltonewah, fly! The fire—the fire!"

He stirred not, except to clasp the dead girl still closer in his arms, and then he answered:

"Never. You have demanded blood. You have built a fire in which to offer a sacrifice in flames and smoke to the Snow Spirit. Behold your victim. It is I, Meltonewah. I am to be the offered sacrifice in your infernal magician's fire. Let it burn!"

Burn! Let it burn! That might well be said, since no power on earth could stop the instant conflagration. In one minute it made the heavens as bright as they were when I saw the same spot "thirty years ago;" when you and I, reader, spent our "first night on the prairie," where we afterward sat down in old Shobonier's wigwam. to hear this story.

It is not yet ended In the next chapter you shall listen to its continuation, in the spirit of his language, if not in his own words.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Then qualled the stoutest hearts.

"Surely the Snow Spirit was angry; but not because the insane father had attempted to rescue his daughter, while the words were still warm on his lips which had pronounced the bitterest curses upon any one who should attempt such a sacrilegious act. Truly, all that is good in this world, or the world of spirits, might well be angry at witnessing such wicked madness as Me-won-i-toc's mania for murder.

Women and children went screaming to their wigwams, and hid their heads beneath the buffalo robes The men looked a moment at the fire, but after the first flash nothing could be seen, for the smoke of the pitch-pine knots was black and stifling.

The Great Bear howled more and more furiously. Such a tempest I never saw before or since. That and the terrible drama just enacted made cowards of the men, and they soon followed the squaws. Why should they stand and watch the smoking pile in that violent blinding storm, which came as water and turned instantly to ice upon everything it touched. This continued until every tree and bush, the groves, and all this broad prairie were one glary sheet of ice. Then came the snow, fine and dry as the dust of Summer, drifting the whole length of Lake Michigan, and only stopping where obstructed, piling, piling to the tree tops. Some of our wigwams were covered out of sight. The cabin of Me-won-i-toc was at the bottom of a great drift, and from its top this way, over the spot where he and his daughter perished, the snow lay on the straight line, so that the boys rode upon their sleds from the hill-side beyond the cabin over its ridge down to the brook. Of course the three victims were buried out of sight.

It was two days and three nights of continuous storm before we could get out to look around, and then some of our people had to be dug out as we dig the fox from his burrow. No one thought it worth while to look for the dead. It was enough to dig out and care for the living.

The whole village was sad, and white men would say superstitious. They knew that the snow would melt, and, as they had plenty of meat no one was in danger of starving, but the opinion was very strong that the words of Me-won-i-toc would prove true in regard to the buffalo, though it was not by any means unanimous that the catastrophe could have been averted if the sacrifice had been perfected.

Speculation as to the cause of Me-won-i-toc's singular conduct was extensively indulged; for no one knew he had discovered that the girl was his own child—the very one that he had so longed once more to behold or repossess.

What a just retribution. If this wicked father had allowed Meltonewah to make his claim his child would have been saved. This, all could understand, and they could understand, too, that then the much-loved young chief would not have been destroyed in that dreadful fire. For him the village deeply mourned. It was several days before it finally resumed its wonted cheerfulness. At length the young people again enjoyed their sports upon the snow. One night the old men, as they sat in their wigwams, quietly smoking their pipes and listening to fire-side talk, were startled by a sudden commotion outside. The young squaws screamed and ran to their wigwams. The boys suddenly ceased their play of riding down hill, and withdrew from the neighborhood of Me-won-i-toc's cabin, and some of them showed by the appearance of their countenances that nothing but pride prevented them from following the squaws, for they were equally frightened.

Inquiry was instituted as to the cause of this alarm. It came out that several persons, while standing upon the snow, near the wigwam of the Great Medicine, heard or beleived they heard his voice inside.

That idea was ridiculed as preposterous by those who had seen distinctly where the dagger entered his body, and knew it not only killed him instantly, but also the girl held in his arms, and as he fell upon the pile of wood where it was first lighted, both must have been nearly consumed, together with Meltonewah, for all were seen in Death's embrace.

To prove this, the old men at once determined to excavate the snow from the place where the fire had been, and the young men, being thus countenanced in what they had already desired, went at the work with a will.

In the course of an hour they reached the spot, and there they found the charred remains of the old man; the fire having burned rapidly, had not been strong enough to consume the body. One hand and one foot were burned off, and the white hair and beard were all gone, and the face was horridly disfigured, for he had fallen upon his back.

The body of Me-won-i-toc was lifted out and deposited according to Indian custom, in a snow grave, to await the time when it could be put away in its final resting-place in the earth, and then the young men said, "now let us find Meltonewah and the White Swan."

Vain search! Neither of the bodies, nor any remains of them were within that circle of fire. This, at length became a fixed fact upon the minds of those in the excavation, and they stopped work and gazed at each other in silent amazement. That silence was terminated in a way that struck terror to stout hearts. Brave as a warrior may be in battle or bodily peril, he quails before all supernatural horrors. This time it was a human voice coming up out of the earth at their feet, or out of the great bank of snow, or else the spirit of Meltonewah spoke to his braves in the air.

Hark! It speaks again!

"Ne-o-mock-e-taw! Me-shi-waz!"

These were the names of Meltonewah's younger brothers. Like him, they had already begun to throw off the shackles of superstition, and fear of intangible bodies. Others were frightened at the voice and believed it was a call for the two young men from the spirit-land. The brothers believed it was a call from quite another direction, and went at once to work digging a way to the door of Me-won-i-toc's cabin, where they believed the spirit voice was imprisoned. It was late in the night when they succeeded in getting it open, yet no one had slept in the village that night. There was cause enough to abandon sleep. Meltonewah was a general favorite, and all lived upon the hope of finding him alive. They remembered now how he had come upon the scene, and thought that perhaps he had retired in the same way, notwithstanding the assertions of some who had looked on, that they saw the fire wrap him in its folds like a mantle.

The interior of the cabin was dark and still. Who should venture to go in? Who would dare to enter the dead man's den, which no one had dared to enter while he lived. Me-shi-waz, who was then but a lad, declared that he would, but first he put his head in and called the name of his brother, and asked, "are you there?"

"Yes, I am here, I was so tired when I heard you coming I fell asleep. I am very hungry, too."

"A dozen men were now ready enough to enter with lights, and there they found the young chief, in his living tomb, with his spirit bride. And how came he there? That was the mystery which they were so anxious to learn, that they could hardly wait for him to break his long fast.

At length he was ready to explain, and this is the substance of what he said:

"When I lifted the White Swan from her father's arms I saw what my own arm had done. I knew that I had killed one whom I would willingly have died to save. I saw the fire circling around me. I heard your cries to save myself. There was yet time. I could have placed my foot on Me-won-i-toc's body and leaped over the pile and escaped the fire; but I had resolved to perish. My heart was already on fire. I answered you, *let it burn*, and moved to straighten myself up to look it in the face. I took one step backward, and instantly all was darkness. I had fallen into the hole through which I had come from the cabin. When I recovered the fire was roaring overhead and all the voices were still. At first I thought I had gone through the fire to the far-off hunting-grounds. I felt the blood trickling over my face from the wound in my head where it struck the stone as I fell. I wiped it away and began to awake. I knew then where I was, and tried to move toward the cabin, carrying the dead girl in my arms. The light shone through the little window and made all light within, all but my heart. That was black and heavy. I was ready to die. I could have called then, but I would not. For an hour I sat in a stupor gazing at the smiling face which I had made cold forever. The smile with which she looked up at me as her breath went away was yet there. The rose and the lily were on her cheeks. The soft blue that has its home among the stars was still in her eyes. Her hair was not like ours. It was of the color of the ripe chestnut. Her hands, so small and white and delicate, that used to send such thrills through me whenever I touched them, were now cold and growing stiff. Upon one of her fingers was a ring which she had told me was given her by the one that she loved. That, I said shall go with you to the spirit land of your people, whither I have sent you all too soon.

At length I thought I will make her ready for the dark cave. I looked about the cabin and found a broad piece of bark, hollow like a trough and just long enough to lay her in as the white men do their dead children. I took away the bloody garment—blood which I had made to flow from her heart—and carefully examined the mark of the bloody tomohawk upon her back.

"Oh, it is his child! I knew it now more certainly than at first, for he had told me the story. He had no pity for the child of another, and thus it was his own he had doomed to death."

Then I wrapped her in one of her father's clean white blankets, and laid her in one corner of the cabin, just beneath the little window, so that I could see her face as long as the light lasted. I intended also to see it again when the sun rose.

By this time I was ready to sleep. What a long, long night. I began to think that daylight would never appear. I could hear the wind howling through the darkness when I waked, but there was no light, and so I slept again. By-and-by I was hungry. Still no light. I got up and raked open the ashes and found the coals of a great hickory log. I stirred them and added a little wood. It blazed, but the smoke would not go out. I began to look about. Surely the Snow Spirit had come to visit me. There where I had placed the White Swan, was a drift of snow. It had covered her all over. I lifted the cloth I had placed over her face to see if it was there. Yes, with the same smile, that I had often watched while she slept on her long journey. I knew now why it was dark. The storm had made a snow grave for us both together. I was not yet ready to die, but without food I must, if I was really buried out of sight and hearing. I listened. The grave is not more silent. Perhaps, thought I, it is night again. I must have slept over one day. I began to search the cabin for food and found enough to satisfy me, and then wrapping the buffalo skins around me went to sleep again. The next time I waked, I heard shouts of laughter and voices, and something that sounded to me as though the boys were riding upon sleds down the roof of the cabin. Then I called. I shouted many times, but the noises all went away. I began to think that every one supposed Meltonewah is dead. He is only buried. By-and-by I heard the sound of the snow paddles. The noise seemed to come through the subterranean passage. I said, they are looking for me where the fire was. They will not find me there. I put my head down to the hole and called my brothers. They did not answer. I was very tired and faint with calling, and so I laid down again and went to sleep. When I next waked, you had found the way to my grave. Now I will live. I am not yet wanted in the spirit land. I have work to do here. Have the buffalo all perished? I have dreamed a great dream. Shall I tell it now? It is about the buffalo and Me-won-i-toc."

"The old man said: 'Now let the young man speak what the Great Medicine has told him of his first hunt after the spirit buffalo. It may tell us what we are to do when the sun smiles upon us again.'

"'When the great snow is gone, you will find many bones upon the fire land; and the trees in the groves shall not outnumber the dead buffalo.' So said Me-won-i-toc to me in my dream. 'You know where I am to be buried, near the big oak, where I can look toward the east, to see when the white men are coming, for the red ones will go away soon after. No one will know my grave from that of a red man, and both will be spurned alike. When this snow melts and runs away, you will see no more buffalo until you have hunted and killed the buffalo spirit.'

"'Will that time ever come?' I inquired, and he answered: 'Not until one of my people comes to you at midnight, and brings the powder and ball, which you will fire into my grave. Therefore let it be a custom until that white man arrives, that every man and woman, and the young lads and girls, shall gather the dry bones where they will lie and bleach in the sun, and when the great fire spreads through all the dry grass, before snow falls, and when the birds fly away from it in terror toward the Lake, and when the wolves run before the deer, then let the people all come and build a fire upon my grave, and cast each one his bone therein; and when it burns bright and the dry bones begin to talk, then you may know that the spirit buffalo is there, and you shall shoot at him many times before he is hit, and until he is hit, not one of the hunters of this tribe can hope to kill a buffalo, though they were as thick as the leaves on the trees. And this you shall remember and practice, or else I shall not rest easy where I am to lie, for you have taken my life in anger, and you have killed the only one who could ask of you the penalty for my blood, and this is therefore what you shall perform forever, until my white brother comes to you with the powder and ball that will kill the spirit buffalo and make peace.'

"The recital of this strange dream cast a gloom over all who heard it. It was looked upon as a dream that they must all obey, and what a penalty! Could any one ever hope to live to see all the combination of circumstances, by which the dread of the spirit that was to haunt their future could be allayed: when the general conflagration of the prairie grass should come before any snow had fallen, with the wind in the south, so that the birds would be scared to fly northward, and when nature's order would be reversed so that the wolves would fly before the deer, and finally a white man should come at the opportune moment with the ammunition to bring down the spirit game that was ever to dwell around the grave of the dead White Medicine."

The reader has seen in this the origin of the singular ceremony of the opening chapter, and why I was welcomed as a messenger of peace, by a people who are wrapt in the shroud of superstition. If he is free of all similar follies, let him jeer at these. If not, why should he laugh at this as "ridiculous Indian folly."

The relationship of the white man and maiden having been established, it was determined that they should be united in the grave, although they could not be in life. So, when the snow went away, "we dug a place under the old oak, and laid them side by side, and you," said Shobonier, "are the only white man that has ever seen where they sleep. We shall tell no other. While we stay here, we will keep the white flag waving. We can do no more. When we are gone, I know that no one will ever watch over the grave of the White Swan as Meltonewah has."

"Meltonewah!" I cried, "where is Meltonewah? I would give my best rifle to see that noble Indian. The impersonation of an honest, true-hearted man, in the garb of a savage. Does he yet live?"

The old man hung his head, as I spoke, and was silent for some minutes after; then he stood up, full of dignity.

"My white brother has expressed a wish. It shall be gratified. He sees that my hair is white as his. He is young. I am old. I have seen many snows. I have been an enemy to his race. I am so no longer. I have told him a strange story of my people, and of two of his. I can tell him many others. They shall all be true. Why should I lie? He has said that I had a true heart. He looks at me earnestly. I will speak the truth now. I am Meltonewah. All the snow upon my head came when I too was young. It fell in one night. It was the night that I killed the White Swan. I killed my wife since then. I had drank the white trader's fire water. She made me angry, for she pulled the white hairs from my head and taunted me with having a squaw's heart, because my head turned white when I killed one of the enemies of our race. I told her that the White Swan was not an enemy; that she was the most lovable being that I ever knew; her heart was all goodness. Then the squaw poured fire in my ears, calling the White Swan by a name that I could not live to hear, and that she should not live to speak. I struck one blow and she was dead. She was not one of our people and the Ottawas were a strong tribe. She had four brothers. I had to give each one a horse, and each one a gun or a blanket, and ever after all of their relatives were to be allowed to hunt upon our grounds. Then my heart was sad, and I begged our people never to call me Meltonewah again. I had disgraced the good name of my father. I hope his spirit is no longer angry with me, for I shall soon follow him. Do you think that I shall see the White Swan where the red men go? I dreamed that I should, while we were alone in the cabin beneath the snow. It was the good spirit that lived in her that protected my life in her father's cabin. When we brought her out to lay her by the side of Me-won-i-toc, the day was warm, but the snow was still deep on the roof, and the sun made it heavy with much water. We had only got a little way from the door, when the timbers crushed and all went down together. Me-won-i-toc and his house had both fallen. No one ever came to inquire after him and the White Swan. They must have traveled far. Does my white brother think that any one will ever come to see where she is buried? I have often dreamed that he whom she loved so well asked me to show him where she sleeps. But how can he ever find the spot, when I am away?"

I answered, "that I would remember, and point it out, if any one should ever inquire." I did not then think that any one ever would. In this I was mistaken. Before I speak of that, however, I wish to introduce the reader to some of the more recent scenes of border life, illustrative of Indian character and superstition, which, though not connected with my old friend Shobonier, used to afford him and his family infinite amusement, when I related it in my capacity of Indian story-teller. It will, also, I hope, as farce does after tragedy, afford those who have read the preceding chapters of this romantic history, a similar relief from the horrors attendant upon all dramatic representations of violent death by fire and sword, such as I have depicted. Yet let us not anticipate, but wait for the curtain to rise upon the next act.

## CHAPTER IX.

Whence comes this questionable shape? Is it of earth or air?

The reader must not forget the date at which my story of Me-won-i-toc commenced. He should also bear in mind, that not only the region that I have glanced at around Lake Michigan, was "Indian country," but that up to a still later date, it extended almost to the center of the State of Indiana. Only two years earlier than the date of my entry upon the Grand Prairie, the tribes of the North-west were so hostile to the advancing tide of white population into Illinois and Indiana, that the "Black Hawk War" resulted, and General Scott, with troops from New-York, had to go out to subdue the Indians. The treaty that ceded a vast territory, embracing the region which I have mentioned, around the head of Lake Michigan, was one of the immediate fruits of General Scott's operations. A few years later, treaties with other branches of the Pottowattomie nation, and with the Miamies, carried the cession down almost to Indianapolis.

How many of the young portion of the inhabitants of Indiana can realize that "thirty years ago" such a large section of the State was held by red men to the exclusion of white ones.

The home of the present Speaker of Cogress (the Hon. Schuyler Colfax, South Bend, Indiana,) but little over thirty years ago, was only known as the trading-post of a half-breed, French-Indian trader. Thence to Indianapolis, traveling was on horseback and with pack horses through a long stretch of Indian country.

Even so late as the time of my journey over that route, to old Me-won-i-toc's village, in moving my family to that beautiful reigon of prairie and grove, we found it necessary to carry along our tent, to camp by the wayside, because wayside inns were scarce, crowded and uncomfortable. Indians then were the principal inhabitants, and were to be seen everywhere along the road. Near where that road crosses the Tippecanoe River, I attended an immense convocation of them in 1836, to listen to the propositions of the United States Government to buy their lands. What farmer who now cultivates that land can realize that it was so lately the abode of such a people as I have been writing about, and about whom I expect to write more.

Carry the retrospection a little further back, to the time of the war of 1812-13, and we shall find that Indianapolis, now the seat of Government of the great, rich, flourishing State of Indiana, was a frontier town, bordering a country of hostile savages.

Within twenty miles of that capital, the extreme frontier settlers were driven in by the attacks, or else by their fear of these hostiles, who included the band of our old acquaintance, Meltonewah, alias Shobonier, though he declared that after the battle of Tippecanoe, he had never lifted his hand against the whites, and having learned their strength, he had constantly and earnestly counseled his people to peace, but not always with success, because his voice was too weak to contend against the great power that lived in the tongue of Tecumseh. It was that which brought on the battle of Tippecanoe in 1811, and, notwithstanding the sore defeat of the Indians, and the earnest wish of Shobonier, and his party, to sue for peace, Tecumseh's influence kept all the tribes hostile, through the Wabash country, from the Grand Prairie to Lake Erie. It was to guard against this hostility, that scouting parties were organized all along the frontier; and it is to one of these expeditions that the present chapter relates.

Enrolled in one of the companies was an odd specimen of the *genus homo*, called Jo. Spraker. He was a Dutchman of the old Pennsylvania stock, with a most capacious department of the interior, and a great power of laying in supplies enough one day to last through the next three; except the supply of his tobacco pipe, which needed often to be replenished, for he smoked unceasingly; on foot or on horseback, indoors or out, and, his companions said, asleep as well as awake. Notwithstanding that he was nearly as thick as long, and looked on horseback something like a fat pumpkin, with a round squash on top of it, and that covered with a broad cabbage leaf; he was a good rider, and first-rate woodsman. Perhaps, because he looked like a butt, his companions were always inclined to make one of him. Yet none of them would have been willing to dispense with his company, and no one would think of disregarding his advice. Although his conduct would have indicated cowardice to a stranger, those who knew him best were well aware that it was only evidence of foresight. On one of the excursions, the Dutchman's caution was so great that he nearly starved the company, in a region where deer were plenty, because he said he knew by the "sign" that Indians were more plenty, and "Py Shove he was not going to be such a tam fool as to tell them where to find him, as they would if the boys should go to making one big noise with their shootin' irons." So the company swore at Jo. and continued to live on the dry corn obtained from the deserted places of the settlers.

One morning, the last one intended for the trip, Jo. aroused his companions before daylight, to get them up and away from their camp fire, "Before they should lose their scalps from the top of their backs, because, py Shove, he had treamed that he had heard the Indians;" though others insisted that what he did hear was nothing but a screech-owl. Jo. did not care for this—"He knew that there were Indians about," because he had "had one very bad tream that he was at home with his wife, Katrine, and he never treamed of his wife, Katrine, that he did not see Indians that day. His wife had brought him some trink of puttermilk, and he was very try in his pelly, but he could not get the buttermilk to his lips." And then he wanted to smoke so bad that he should choke, and his son, Peter filled his pipe and brought it, "But every time it preaks in mine mouth before I could get some smokes," and all that was sign enough that he should have his head "praked, if he lay in his ped any more. So he gets right up to watch for the redskins."

Of course, the men knew that looking for Indians on account of a dream, or because the dreamer had heard a screech-owl, was ridiculous, and some of them were ready to curse the Dutchman for waking them out of a sound sleep; yet they could not help appreciating his eternal vigilance. So they got up good-naturedly, and parched their corn, and greasing it with a few of the last scraps of fat pork left of their ten days' rations, made their breakfast, and saddled up for a start toward the settlements, "hungry enough," one of them said, "to eat dog."

As they were going home, and had seen no fresh sign of the enemy, some of the men insisted upon being allowed to knock over one of the deer that occasionally showed his "flag of truce" within easy rifle shot. To this the Dutchman strenuously objected, declaring that Indians were about, and directly confirming his suspicion by the evidence of a small bush that had lately been cut off by a rifle ball. This very small sign—too small for eyes unaccustomed to look for such things—was duly examined and discussed. In the mean time Jo. had dismounted, and was following a very faint moccasin track, with the cunning and sagacity of an old Indian hunter. He soon found where a deer had been wounded, and called his companions to counsel whether it had probably fallen by friend or foe; as the distance was not so far from where white men lived, that it might not have been some daring hunter who had thus obtained a supply of fresh meat. The company appeared generally convinced that the hunter was a white man, because the Indians knew that the scouts were constantly scouring that region, and would not venture to hunt there.

"And, py Shove," said Jo., "so does n't the white man know that the Indians are always on the watch, and there is only one big fool enough to come here, and that is Jake Hoover. An if it aint Jake, then it is an Indian. Now let us look for more sign."

First, there were the moccasin tracks. That was ruled out, for Jake oftener wore moccasins than boots. Pretty soon they found the carcass of the deer nicely skinned and hung up on a tree. "That," said the white-men-theorists, "is sure sign. An Indian would have packed his meat to his wigwam."

"What if he had none?"

This was good logic for Jo.; and so was the continuation of his argument:

"If he was on a scout, as they were, and was going toward the settlements, to see whose cabin was the least guarded, and whose scalp he could get the easiest, he would take the skin for a blanket, with which he could make himself into a deer, if likely to be seen, and leave the meat till he came back. A white man always leaves the skin on until he gets the carcass home, because it keeps the meat clean."

That part of the argument was pretty strong for the Dutchman. He was not done yet.

"Two Indians," says Jo. His companions began to laugh. The imperturbable Spraker was too intent upon his proofs to care who laughed at him. So he went on, talking to himself.

"Two Indians. One tall, the other short. One mit a long rifle, the other mit a short smooth-bore."

"That's old Jake Hoover and young Jake, exactly," said one of the men.

"No, it is n't," Jo. replied. "It is one big Indian mit a little one. Can't you read sign. One of them had a long, sharp-pointed knife, and the other a short one mit a broad blade."

"Jo. Spraker, tell us how you read all this;" said Bill Spriggins, "and I will give you my pipe in the place of the one that you broke in your dream last night. You'll burn your nose trying to smoke that short stub."

"How do I read it?" he answered, indignantly, and then illustrated somewhat in this manner: "Why, stupid, I want to know if it aint plain as A, B, C? Look here: the first one fired the rifle; that didn't kill, 'cause that bush turned the course of the ball. There's where it struck, and cut this tearing hole in the meat. Then smooth-bore fired, and here is his hole, right agin the heart, large, but round and smooth. Now, open your eyes: can't you read this—where they set their guns up against this tree? There is the smooth bore, short and big at the butt, and here is the rifle print. Examine closely and you will see that each made a little scratch on the bark where the muzzles rested. Now read the two prints of the bloody knife blades upon that smooth log. What's that you say; you don't see how I know that one was tall and t'other short? Don't you see that the short one couldn't reach up to hang the deer, without getting a chunk to stand upon. And this is not all. He was not a boy, but a little old man. He stepped short and turned his toes in. I can read that. And here is where each man has cut out his rations. This one loves fat. That is the old man. The young fellow has cut his from the ham, all lean. Let me see: they must have been most powerful hungry, or else they have taken enough for just two days. This deer was hung yesterday. These two spies have gone East, and will be back to-morrow. Of course they will see our tracks, and count every horse, so you may as well take the meat, as contraband, and then skedaddle home and let folks know that the red devils are astir. Depend upon it there's more of them. An old fellow with a smooth bore, and his long son with a rifle, ai'nt down here alone, so near the settlement. This rifle is English. It isn't one of your common country stocks. Don't you see where the brass upon the breech cuts a smooth print in the earth. They're some of the Tecumseh devils, you may depend on't. And here is more sign. Now what's this? Oh they have got a dog with 'em. That looks more like hunting."

To this his opponents answered:

"That looks more like its being Jake Hoover and young Jake, with their dog; and it's not far to Jake's clearing, and we may as well put for that; and I dare say we shall find them there and get something to eat. I heard Jake say that he intended to go out, Indians or no Indians, and gather his corn."

"Jake Hoover, mit him dog, am it?" said Spraker, with an air of ineffable contempt. "Don't you see vat dis dog hab von bushy tail. There's vere him sat in the mud, vile him master dressed von deer, and dere is vere him jump up on ter de log and printed his tail, so plain as mine pig pibles. I thought, Tom Clark, vat you brag some about reading print; but you failed here. Then, don't you see that both of these varmints are afoot. Ven did ever you know lazy Jake Hoover to travel that way? He's always a straddle of von old white horse of his. Beside all dat, vot a fools you are ven you tinks he would leave this venison here for you to pack off. I tells you von big pible truth: dis is Indian work, and I am going to make von tracks out of dese woods afore dark."

The evidence was so strong upon all points, that nineteen Yankees had to surrender to one Dutchman. The captain ordered the company to spread out and look sharp for more sign, and rendezvous at Jake Hoover's cabin, where they would find plenty of corn to feed with, and as they now had a supply of meat for supper and breakfast, they need not try to reach the settlement that night. They were ordered to come in separately, from different directions, so as not to leave any trail, and to fasten the horses out in the bushes and feed them, but not to unsaddle till all hands were in with reports of "sign," if they found any.

None but the Dutchman found "sign" and he reported it plenty, and advised an immediate march home, as the only safe course; but as the night was likely to be dark and rainy, his companions were not disposed to that course. Spraker was the last man in, and he found the company prepared for making themselves comfortable. They were just going to light a big pile of wood in the fire-place, at which they would roast the captured venison, and some of Jake Hoover's potatoes, and "have a jolly time generally."

"Yaw, very jolly. Very jolly for the redskins too. They won't disturb your supper. They will let you eat that and go to sleep. Then they'll come and look through the cracks, for Jake Hoover's cabin ai'nt very tight. When they have counted you all by ter fire light—they von't count von Dutchman in that trap—they'll put in ter guns and finish twelve von you at least. I knows vats are so many, if not more; and ven you can'ts get out von your trap, they'll take the scalps off mit ter her heads of every mother's son vats got hair on ter top of his head. Vell, den, now, vy don't you lights ter fire? Jo Spraker, ter fool Dutchman will tells your peoples vare to look for your bones, in Jakey Hoover's burnt cabin. He is going home."

This harangue produced a commotion. It was soon settled that Jo Spraker was no fool, nor was it evidence of cowardice, to be unwilling to expose one's self to almost certain destruction, if hostile Indians were really in the vicinity. His theory was "that the two who killed the deer, were on a scout in advance of the main party, which was lying back waiting for the word to strike, and that the cold rain that had set in, would drive them to shelter in some of the deserted cabins; and that they were quite as likely to come to this as any other; and if the men would stay there, they must wipe out all sign except what Jake Hoover would naturally make, and then creep up into the loft and go to sleep. He would stand the first watch.

Hungry as they all were, the men finally concluded to sup upon the same fare that their horses had, and follow Jo. Spraker's advice, as it was by this time dark, and a very chilly rain falling.

As the cabin loft was partly filled with ears of corn, in the husk, it made a very comfortable place for the men to lie down; and wrapped in their blankets so as to be comfortably warm, all but the wakeful Dutchman were soon asleep. The others said: "Jo can't sleep, because he dares not smoke; he is afraid the Indians will get on his track as a dog would a deer; he knows that one might scent his old pipe as far as he could a skunk."

To enable the reader better to understand what follows, he must halt in this part of Jo Spraker's watch, while I describe a log cabin; at least the one built by "lazy Jake Hoover," as he was generally called by the settlers. The body was made of round logs, about eighteen feet long, from six to twelve inches diameter, laid up like a cob-house, the corners being notched so as to bring the courses of logs within a few inches of each other. These spaces being filled with "chinking," made of split stuff or chips, are "daubed" with clay to make them tight and warm. As it was Summer when Jake's cabin was built, and it did not need to be warm, it was not daubed, and probably never would have been, if he had not been driven out of it, till cold weather compelled him to do it for self protection. It was through this kind of open walls, that Jo Spraker thought the Indians could "count the game in the trap."

The door opened outwards, and could be easily fastened by a single log outside, but not on the inside, as it turned upon wooden hinges and closed by a wooden latch.

The roof of a cabin is made of "shakes" laid upon "ribs." The lower ends of the shakes rest against a "butting pole" at the eaves, and successive "weight poles" at each course. It is the weight of these poles that keeps the loose shakes in place; as there is not a nail in the whole structure; and all the poles rest successively upon "knees," from the butts up, so that knocking out a single support, may let the whole side of the roof down by the run.

The shakes are thin oak staves, usually split about four feet long and four to six inches wide, and they make a roof, which, although horribly rough in appearance, sheds rain admirably; but is rather leaky to a fine driving snow; so much so that I have been pretty well snowed under, while sleeping beneath such a shelter.

The "loft floor" is made of the same kind of materials, the ends resting upon round poles laid across from side to side of the house, and such a floor is sometimes very shaky, but is not much used, because the room under a low roof does not admit of upright traveling.

It was in such a loft that our men hid themselves. Jo Spraker was the last one up, and he pulled up the ladder after him and carefully closed the aperture; after having as carefully wiped out all the tracks, or covered them over with corn husks. Some of the men were disposed to laugh at the Dutchman and his dreams, because he had declared that they were to see Indians that day. As it was now black darkness, the men thought his chance of seeing any that day, pretty small.

Determined not to be caught in a trap, with no chance for a run to the old mare, Jo removed a few of the shakes in the roof, so that in case of emergency he could get out that way and jump to the ground. But all this "tom foolery," as his companions called it, served them for amusement and boisterous laughter at the Dutchman, and his "pig pelly" and his pipe and his buttermilk and wife Katrine and son Peter, until the captain was obliged to order silence and sleep, so as to be ready for an early start. Spraker suggested that they would start early enough, and run fast enough, if the red devils should come and set fire to the corn husks before morning. Then the fools wouldn't laugh at him for making a hole through the roof, so as to be able to get out quickly. Bill Spriggs, however, told Jo "that three of them would throw the whole side of the roof off, in case of necessity before he could get his Dutch tub out of that hole."

At length, tired of bantering the Dutchman and laughing at their own wit, all but Jo slept soundly. As he could not smoke, he could not sleep, the men said; but Jo knew that he had seen Indian signs, and that this cabin was just in thei rway for a call, and he would have been disappointed if they had not come. So he watched. By and by he heard a light tread outside. "Perhaps it is a wolf that has scented the venison. Hush; yes it must be a wolf; there is its short, sharp bark." It is answered by another out in the woods. Then a hoot-owl sends his voice out in chorus with a companion not far off."

"There is too much method in all this noise of wolves and owls," thought Jo. "It sounded very much like the cunning of Indians, to imitate these cries as signals to each other." He was right, and he watched intently for further evidence to confirm his suspicions. It came quicker and stronger than he anticipated. As soon as the Indians ascertained that the house was uninhabited, they entered boldly and proceeded at once to light a fire, and divest themselves of their wet blankets and moccasins, which they hung upon pins in the wall, around the room, and also their powder-horns and bullet-pouches. The guns were all stacked in one corner, and their owners disposed around the fire, where they soon had some cuts of venison roasting upon sticks, or suspended by strings from the mantle-log which crossed the broad fire-place. All this, however, was either guessed at by Jo Spraker, or found out afterwards, for he could see nothing, although dying with curiosity.

"If I could only count the red devils," thought he, "I should know then what to do."

If he could ascertain that there were not over half a dozen, he determined that he would creep out of his hole in the roof and fasten the door outside, and then shout to his comrades to rise, "slay and eat." If the number should be found so large that they could not be managed, he might run and at least save his own life. His position was at the extreme end from where his companions were sleeping, or "playing 'possum," he could not tell which. At any rate they were still, as still as the Dutchman. To be more so was needless. The Indians were also very quiet, talking low, and but little, and appeared to be either sleeping or enjoying the warmth of the blazing fire, while their supper was cooking. If Jo. Spraker had been in the place of the venison that smelt so savory, he would not have felt much hotter. He was in a profuse perspiration. What should he do? Something; and that speedily. What *if* the Indians should suspect what was in that loft, and touch a blazing brand to the dry husks that protruded through the cracks of the loose floor? The thought was horrible. It already was making roast meat of a Dutchman. He feared that when they got ready to leave some of them might apply the torch merely for sport, or to roast the mice which were constantly running about and rattling the husks, throwing down grains of corn. This was a great point in favor of a project that entered Jo's head; which was to move about six feet forward, to a spot were he saw the light shine up through, and there, he thought, "I can count the occupants of the lower floor." Watching when the Indians were most noisy, or when the storm beat hardest, he began his perilous movement. Perilous it proved. The rotundity of the Dutchman interfered with his crawling, but, by placing his feet against the roof, he could shove his heavy body forward slowly. This was his peril.

Now it happened that "lazy Jake Hoover" had used a crooked pole for one of his floor joists, and placing its bow upward had neglected to fasten it in that position, or else the wedges had fallen out and left it upon a poise, ready to roll over, as Jo. Spraker said, "just as easy as falling off a log." This pole supported the ends of two courses of shakes, and these were loaded with corn, and on top of this was the Dutchman, so intent upon counting the Indians, that he did not notice while shoving his body forward, he shoved the corn with it. His position was directly over the heads of the Indians, who were at this time all squatted in a circle before the fire eating their supper. One of them said something witty, and there was a burst of merriment, that would effectually hide the noise of Jo.'s movement, which he was making, turtle fashion, toward his place of observation. Suiting the movement to the occasion, he gave a powerful push forward, and then.—

Then!! Yes, then you may imagine a combination of earthquakes, volcanoes, thunder gusts, tornadoes, explosions, all bursting at once upon this wondering world, and you would fail to realize the full measure of astonishment that pervaded Jake Hoover's cabin.

Then, what had produced all this consternation; not the least of which had fallen upon Jo. Spraker, as he was coming down belly foremost from that loft, mixed up with corn and husks, in a mass of flying, rolling, clattering shakes, all of which had been precipitated by the rolling of the crooked pole. He only realized that he was going down right into the midst of a gang of bloodthirsty savages, the number of which no man could tell, for he had not counted them, and in his fright he lost all his usual caution about holding his tongue, for he screamed lustily: "Oh, mein coot Cot Almighty, here I comes;" and with him came two of his companions, whose foundation was suddenly knocked out from under them.

To say that Jo. and his companions were "awfully frightened," would not express all the truth. But it would express it to say that they were not half as much frightened as the Indians. They undoubtedly thought the devil had come for them, if we may judge their opinions from the way that they bolted for the door, and ran to the shelter of the brush and darkness.

Who could blame them? They might have stood the noise and the corn and timber, but to see Jo. Spraker, the big-bellied Dutchman, with his legs and arms sticking out so as to bear a considerable resemblance to a monster bull-frog, flying through the air, was too much for Indian philosophy.

But this was not all. Seventeen stout men lying under that low roof, sprang up so suddenly and simultaneously, that they carried the roof up with them, and pitched it down upon the heads of the Indians, or close to their heels, just as they emerged from the door.

"Never before nor since," said one of the actors in the scene, who related it to me, "did I hear such a perfect realization of an infernal clatter. I did not wonder that the Indians ran; I wonder if they ever stopped, for they were in the lightest possible running order; with nothing on but their kilts—everything else was safely stored in Jake Hoover's cabin, as spoils of war to Jo. Spraker's bloodless victory, over seventeen warriors, which that number of guns proved; together with other traps, enough to load a pack horse."

Hearing the noise overhead, the Dutchman looked up and said very confidently:

"Ya can coom town now. The fight is all over. I is got the victory. And now I is going to put mine supper in mine pelly. Ah, mine Cot, dish is mine tream; and here is mine smoke pipe all gone into so many little bits as Jake Hoover's cabin."

Then with the utmost coolness he drew his knife, and began to cut away upon the roast venison, as though it had been cooked purposely for his own use. The others were so perfectly astonished, that they did not immediately comprehend the situation. When they did, they were ready to join the Dutchman, and partake of a supper in place of the one which his caution had cheated them out of, though it had undoubtedly saved all their lives; for which Bill Spriggins was so grateful that he constructed a corn-cob pipe, with a turkey-wing quill for a stem, and presented it to Jo. in place of the one ruined in the great avalanche.

It was some time before the company all overcame the fright occasioned by the Dutchman's attempt to count the Indians, sufficiently to enjoy the good food already cooked, or ready for that operation. It was soon determined that there was not the least danger of molestation from the foe that had just left so precipitately. Then the men devoted an hour or two to the full enjoyment of satisfying very strong appetites. The spoils being gathered, counted and packed upon the spare horses, the company started for the settlement, where the story of the Dutchman's exploit lost nothing by frequent repetition, nor did Jo. Spraker ever lose the name of "the flying Dutchman."

Jake Hoover got some of his neighbors to venture out out with teams and haul in his corn, and next Spring, when no longer in danger of Indians, they spent half a day and a gallon of whisky upon his cabin, and made it "as good as new," and Jo. Spraker took particular pains to fasten that pole till it would stay in its place, so as not to tumble another Dutchman down and break his pipe.

That was fifty years ago or more, and almost all the actors in the scenes of that frontier life have passed away, and the frontier, where is it now? Certainly not in Indiana, and an Indian would be almost as great a curiosity in the vicinity of Jo. Spraker's exploit at "counting the Indians" in that log cabin, as though such a people never existed and held possession of all that fair land.

What that company thought of their visit to Jake Hoover's cabin, or whether they ever knew what frightened them, remained a mystery to the whites for many years.

In one of the visits of Col. Ewing, a noted Indian trader, to some of the Pottowattomie villages, I think about the same time that I made the acquaintance of old Shobonier; he told this story, and was surprised to find that it produced upon some of his hearers, at first consternation, and then the most boisterous merriment. They were part of the company, and had never learned until now whether the animal that they saw descending among them was the devil or Jo. Spraker. Taking it to be the former, and of course more formidable enemy, they ran—oh, how they ran, without stopping to think or look behind, for many miles. They finally succeeded in reaching their village in a pitiable plight, from cold and hunger, and the story that they told of how the devil descended in the form of a monster bull-frog, and tore the house all to atoms, formed the staple of an Indian fireside evening entertainment, that was repeated for many years, and I have reproduced it to illustrate the superstitious character of the race, as well as "life on the frontier," just as I intend to reproduce many other scenes, historical and entertaining.

## CHAPTER X.

Who sleeps in this lone grave—for in that grave a secret lies?

Notwithstanding that I opened my story, or rather the first in the series, with a view of an Indian burying-place, and although it does not give a cheerful aspect to a picture, it suits the purposes of the history I am writing, that I should open this chapter also with a similar scene, to which I must return again and again; and so also, we must by-and-by come back again to the grave of Me-won-i-toc, to finish up the incidents connected with his life, or that of some one of his cotemporaries.

Travelers through the northern counties of Indiana have often observed and admired the many beautiful little lakes which add to the loveliness of that region, as well as enhance its value for residences. Upon the border of one of these lakes, on the day following that which introduced the reader to some of the living characters of my story, while I was perambulating its shores in search of a favorable location for a cabin, with a view of taking up a permanent residence in that part of the State, I discovered a solitary Indian grave, which awakened a long train of reflections. I wondered very much why it was solitary, since it was so contrary to the general practice of the people. Yet there was the white flag, and the place bore evident marks of care, showing that the dead had living friends who visited the spot, at least once a year. Otherwise, judging from the fact of finding upon a small tree that stood near its head, something that very closely resembled the letters A. A. I should have wondered whether it might not be the grave of some white man whose companions had buried him here and marked the initial letters of his name on the nearest tree. I tried hard to guess how long since this mound and these marks were made. I could not make it out less than twenty or twenty-five years, which would carry the time back to a season of general hostility of all the Indians in the country north of the Wabash. Of course, no white men could have been here at that period, unless as prisoners, and then one would not have been likely to be buried with honor in such a romantic spot. Still, from some indefinable cause, I was impressed with the idea that this was not the burial-place of any Indian, and the same opinion clung to me at every subsequent visit; for I found a location for my cabin and a home for some years, only a few miles from the lake of the "lone grave." I tried in vain to get some information about the occupant of that spot, from the Indians; but in vain; for whoever he might be, he was not more reticent than they. I thought about this matter by day and dreamed about it by night. It was the specter in my path. I was convinced, the more I examined the spot, that my conjectures were right, that the occupant was no Indian. I cut away the overgrown bark, and uncovered the two letters so that I was sure of them. Then I observed a small scar upon a little oak at the foot of the grave and found "1811," quite distinct. "Why," said I musing, "that is the date of the battle of Tippecanoe." I was still more and more puzzled. Then I began to think over many of the incidents of that battle which I had obtained by social intercourse with Gen. Harrison, Judge Parke, Gen. Tipton, Henry P. Thornton, and other well-known old citizens of Indiana, and some who are not so well known, but were important actors in that terrible conflict. To one of these, named Michael Haskins, but better known among the frontier-men thirty or forty years ago, as "Mike the hunter," I am indebted for many of the incidents which I shall record in this history, of the battle of Tippecanoe.

The great region, embracing Northern Indiana, Northern Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and other portions of the North-West, owe much of their present prosperity to the victory won upon that battlefield, by as brave a company of men as any of the noble band of heroes who have laid down their lives in defense of the Union in the present war, fighting people but little less savage than those with red skins at Tippecanoe.

Let us retrospect. We stand upon the bank of the Wabash, a few miles below the mouth of the Tippecanoe. The city of Lafayette is there now, intersected by several railways and occasionally visited by steamboats that come puffing up the Wabash, to carry away a portion of the enormous products of the surrounding farms, that overload the canal, and ordinary river boats and railways. The city is surrounded by one of the richest agricultural districts in the world. It is flanked in every direction by other flourishing towns, and all around, the appearance of wealth, comfort, and abundance of everything necessary to support a dense population of farmers and manufacturers, gives an impression to a stranger, that this must be one of the oldest settled, as well as richest portions of the great country beyond the Alleghanies.

It is now as I write, the last of 1864. It is then, only about fifty-four years since Tecumseh, upon this very spot, urged the Indians of the Wabash to make war upon the whites, who, he said, were overrunning the whole country. The only way to avert their doom was to rise and push back the onward rolling wave.

This advice, though as wild and foolish as if he had told his dupes that they could push back the Alleghanies, was not as foolish as that given in the same region, in 1864, by men who advised their dupes to set themselves against the power of the General Government.

Then, as now, there was a Government and a military power. Then it was weak; now it is strong. At both periods it was strong enough to crush Tecumseh's savages, or Dodd's blood-thirsty "Knights."

The battle of Tippecanoe, was fought November 7, 1811. It was a crushing defeat of all the Indian forces that could be mustered by the confident assurance of Elskatawwa, Tecumseh's brother, the Prophet, that a complete victory would crown this last effort to stop the white tide from rolling over the Wabash.

My old friend, Shobonier, and all his family were in that battle. It was his last. He was there wholly subdued. He knew that it was useless to contend longer. From him I learned much that has never been written, of that bloody fight and its effect upon the minds of the Indians. And this was only a little over fifty-three years ago. Where was Lafayette then? Where all the Wabash towns and all the immense population now spread over that broad fertile district of the Wabash Valley, the gate to which was opened by the battle of Tippecanoe?

"It was fully believed," said Shobonier, "among the Indians, that we should defeat Gen. Harrison, and that we should hold the line of the Wabash, and dictate terms to the whites. The great cause of our failure, was the Miamies, whose principal country was south of the river, and they wanted to treat with the whites so as to retain ther land, and they played false to their red brethren and yet lost all. They are now surrounded and will soon be crushed. The whites will shortly have all their lands and they will be driven away."

This talk proved true a year or two later. In 1811, who could look forward fifty years? Certainly none of those who fought at Tippecanoe. Although this is an age of battles, the records of which have almost surfeited readers, I cannot help believing that a few of the particulars of one that is so intimately connected with some of the incidents and characters of my story must be interesting to its readers.

The taciturn nature of the Indian conceals much that would be interesting to us. It has buried in oblivion most of the causes that led to that battle, terrible in its action to both white and red men. I have seldom seen an Indian shed a tear. I have seen them roll down the cheeks of old Shobonier, while talking of this "great fight." He had been one of the delegation that visited Gen. Harrison at Vincennes, then the seat of government of Indian territory, to try to arrange terms of peace. The only terms offered them, were just what our Government now offers to other Rebels, who have shown more savageness than the Indians.

To every Indian talk, Gen. Harrison said: "Lay down your arms. Bury the hatchet, already bloody with murdered victims, and promise to submit to your great chief at Washington, and he will be a father to you, and forget all that is past. If we take your land, we will pay for it. But you must not think that you can stop the march of white men westward."

"There was truth and justice in all that talk," said Shobonier, "but the Indians with me would not listen to it. It was dictating to them. They wanted to dictate to him. They had counted his soldiers, and looked at them with contempt. Our young men said: "We are ten to their one. If they stay upon the other side, we will let them alone. If they cross the Wabash, we will take their scalps, or drive them into the river. They cannot swim. Their powder will be wet. The fish will eat their bodies. The bones of the white men will lie upon every sand-bar. Their flesh will fatten buzzards. These white soldiers are not warriors. One half of them are calico peddlers. Their faces are white. Their hands are soft. The other half can only shoot squirrels. They cannot stand before men. They will all run when we make a noise in the night like wild cats fighting for their young. We will fight for ours, and to keep the pale faces from our wigwams. What will they fight for? They won't fight. They will run. We will attack them in the night."

"Such were the opinions and arguments of our warriors. They did not appreciate the great strength of the white men. I knew their great war chief, and some of his young men. He was a good man, very soft in his words to his red children, as he called us; and that made some of our men with hot heads mad. I listened to his soft words, but I looked into his eyes. They were full of fire. I knew that they would be among his men, like coals in the dry grass. The first wind would raise a great flame. I feared for the red men that might be sleeping in its way. I, too, counted his men. I was one of the scouts that watched all their march up the river from Vincennes. I knew that we were like these bushes—very many. They were like these trees; here and there one. But I knew, too, when a great tree falls, it crushes many little ones. I saw some of the men shoot squirrels, as they rode along, and I said, the Indians have no such guns. These men will kill us as far as they can see."

"They cannot see in the night," said our men who were determined to fight. So I held my tongue. I saw that all of our war chiefs were hot for battle with the white men. But they told Gen. Harrison that they only wanted peace. They wanted him to come up into their country and show their people how strong he was, and then they would all be willing to make a treaty and smoke the great pipe together. This was what he came for. He did not intend to fight the Indians. They had deceived him

Yet he was wary. He was a great war chief. Every night he picked his camping ground and set his sentinels all around, as though he expected we would attack him in the dark. We should have done so before we did, if it had not been for this precaution. Some of our people taunted him for this, and pretended to be angry that he should distrust them, for they still talked of their willingness to treat, as soon as they could get all the people together. This is part of our way of making war. So the white army marched further and further into our country, unsuspicious, I think, of our treachery. In one thing we were deceived. We expected that the white warriors would come up on the south bank of the river, and then we could parley with them; but they crossed far down and came on this side, right up to the great Indian town that Elskatawwa had gathered at the mouth of the Tippecanoe. In the meantime he had sent three chiefs down on the south side to meet the army and stop it with a talk, until he could get his warriors ready. Tecumseh had told the Indians not to fight, but when he was away, they took some scalps, and Gen. Harrison demanded that we should give up our men as murderers, to be punished.

Tecumseh had spent months in traveling all over the country around Lake Michigan, making great talks to all the warriors, to get them to join him in his great designs upon the pale faces. His enmity was the most bitter of any Indian I ever knew. It was like that of Me-won-i-toc. He was not one of our nation, he was a Shawnee. His father was a great warrior. His mother came from the country where there is no snow, near the great water that is salt. His father was treacherously killed by a white man before Tecumseh was born, and his mother taught him while he sucked to hate all white men, and when he grew big enough to be ranked as a warrior, she used to go with him every year to his father's grave and make him swear that he would never cease to make war upon the Americans. To this end he used all his powers of strategy, skill, and cunning, both with white men and red. He had very much big talk. He was not at the battle of Tippecanoe. If he had been there it would not have been fought. It was too soon. It frustrated all his plans.

Elskatawwa was Tecumseh's older brother. He was a great medicine. He talked much to the Indians and told them what had happened. He told much truth, but some things that he told did not come to pass. He was called "The Prophet." Your people knew him only by that name. He was very cunning, but he was not so great a warrior as his brother, and he could not so well control the young warriors who were determined to fight.

Perhaps your people do not know that the battle of Tippecanoe was the work of white men, who came from Canada and urged us to make war. Two of them who wore red coats were at the Prophet's town the day that your army came. It was they who urged Elskatawwa to fight. They dressed themselves like Indians, to show us how to fight. They did not know our mode. We wanted to attack at midnight. They wanted to wait till daylight. The battle commenced before either party was ready, because one of your sentinels discovered one of our warriors, who had undertaken to creep into your camp and kill the great chief where he slept. The Prophet said if that was done he should kill all the rest or they would run away. He promised us a horse-load of scalps, and a gun for every warrior, and many horses. The men that were to crawl upon their bellies into camp were seen in the grass by a white man who had eyes like an owl, and he fired and hit his mark. That Indian was not brave. He cried out. He should have lain still and died. Then other men fired. The other Indians were fools. They jumped up out of the grass and yelled. They believed what had been told them, that the white men would run at a noise made in the night. Then many Indians who had crept up very close so as to be ready to take scalps when the white men ran, all yelled like wolves, wild cats, and screech owls; but it did not make the white men run. They jumped right up from their sleep with guns in their hands, and sent a shower of bullets at every spot where they heard a noise. They could not see us. We could see them, for they had fires. Whether we were ready or not we had to fight now, for the battle was begun. We were still sure that we should win. The Prophet had told us that he could not be defeated. We did not rush in among your men because of the fires. Directly the men ran away from some of the fires, and a few foolish Indians went into the light and were killed. One Delaware could not make his gun go off. He ran up to a fire to fix the lock. I saw a white man whom I knew very well; he was a great hunter, who could shoot a tin cup from another man's head, put up his gun to shoot the Delaware. I tried to shoot the white man, but another who carried the flag just then unrolled it so that I could not see my aim. Then I heard the gun and saw the Delaware fall. I thought he was dead. The white man thought so too, and ran to him with his knife. He wanted a Delaware scalp. Just as he got to him the Delaware jumped up and ran away. He had only lost an ear. A dozen bullets were fired at the white man while he was at the fire, but he shook them off like an old buffalo bull.

Our people were more surprised than yours. The fight had begun too soon. They were not all ready. The plan was to creep up through the wet land where horses could not run, upon one side of the camp, and on the other through a creek and steep bank covered with bushes, so as to be ready to use the tomahawk upon the sleeping men as soon as their chief was killed. The Indians thought white men who had marched all day would sleep. They found them awake.

The Prophet had sent word to Gen. Harrison that day that the Indians were all peaceable—that they did not want to fight—that he might lie down and sleep, and they would treat with their white brothers in the morning, and bury the hatchet. But the white men did not believe.

In one minute from the time the first gun was fired I saw the great war chief mount his horse, and begin to talk loud. The fires were put out, and we could not tell where to shoot, except on one side of the camp, and from there the white soldiers ran, but we did not succeed, as the Prophet told us that we should, in scaring the whole army, so that all the men would run and hide in the grass like young quails.

I never saw men fight with more courage than these did after it began to grow light. The battle was lost to us by an accident, or rather by two.

A hundred warriors had been picked out during the night for this desperate service, and in the great council-house the Prophet had instructed them how to crawl like snakes through the grass, and strike the sentinels; and if they failed in that, then they were to rush forward boldly and kill the great war-chief of the whites, and if they did not do this the Great Spirit, he said, had told him that the battle would be hopelessly lost. This the Indians all believed.

If the one that was first discovered and shot had died like a brave, without a groan, the sentinel would have thought that he was mistaken, and it would have then been more favorable than before for the Indians. The alarm having been made, the others followed Elskatawwa's orders, which were, in case of discovery, so as to prevent the secret movement, they should make a great yell as a signal for the general attack. All of the warriors had been instructed to creep up to the camp through the tall grass, during the night, so close that when the great signal was given, the yell would be so loud and frightful the whole of the whites would run for the thick woods up the creek, and that side was left open for this purpose.

"You will, then," said the Prophet, "have possession of their camp and all its equipage, and you can shoot the men with their own guns from every tree. But above all else you must kill the great chief."

It was expected that this could be easily done by those who were allotted to rush into camp in the confusion of the first attack. It was a great mistake of the Prophets red-coated advisers, to defer this attack until morning. It would have succeeded when the fires were brighter in the night. Then they could not have been put out.

I was one of the spies that had dogged the steps of the army to give the Prophet information every day. I saw all the arrangement of the camp. It was not made where the Indians wanted it. The place was very bad for the attack. But it was not that which caused the failure. It was because Gen. Harrison changed horses. He had ridden a grey one every day on the march, and he could have been shot twenty times by scouts that were hiding along the route. That was not what was wanted, until the army got to a place where it could be all wiped out. That time had now come, and the hundred braves were to rush in and shoot the "big chief on a white horse," and then fell back to a safer place.

This order was fully obeyed, but we soon found to our terrible dismay that the "big chief on a white horse" that was killed was not Gen. Harrison. He had mounted a dark horse. I know this, for I was so near that I saw him, and I knew him as well as I knew my own brother.

I think that I could then have shot him, but I could not lift my gun. The Great Spirit held it down. I knew then that the great white chief was not to be killed, and I knew that the red men were doomed.

As soon as daylight came our warriors saw that the Prophet's grand plan had failed—that the great white chief was alive riding fearlessly among his troops in spite of bullets, and their hearts melted.

After that the Indians fought to save themselves, not to crush the whites. It was a terrible defeat. Our men all scattered and tried to get away. The white horsemen chased them and cut them down with long knives. We carried off a few wounded prisoners in the first attack, but nearly all the dead lay unscalped, and some of them lay thus till the next year when another army came to bury them.

Our women and children were in the town, only a mile from the battle-field, waiting for victory and its spoils. They wanted white prisoners. The Prophet had promised that every squaw of any note should have one of the white warriors to use as her slave, or to treat as she pleased.

Oh how these women were disappointed! Instead of slaves and spoils of the white men coming into town with the rising sun, their town was in flames, and women and children were hunted like wolves and killed by hundreds, or driven into the river and swamps to hide.

With the smoke of that town and the loss of that battle I lost all hope of the red men being able to stop the whites.

I fought that day by the side of an old Ottawa chief and his son, the brother of my wife. We were in the advance party, and several of those nearest to me fell by the bullets or blows of two horsemen, who appeared to be proof against our guns. At length one of these two men killed the young man and wounded the old chief, and at the same time I brought him and his horse to the ground. The horse ran, before he fell, down the bluff into the creek, quite out of the way of the whites. The man's leg was broken, and he had another bad wound. I could have taken his scalp easily, but Sabaqua, the old chief, begged me not to kill him. He wanted to take him to his wife alive, in place of her son whom the white brave had killed.

I was willing enough to do this, for I always respected a brave man, and this one was, beside, the handsomest white man I had ever seen. I knew him as soon as I saw him closely. I had seen him before. I went to Vincennes only one moon before the battle as a spy. I told the Governor that I came for peace. This young man was there, and I talked with him. He was not one of the warriors but had come because he was a great brave. He had told me laughingly that he would come to see me at my wigwam. I thought now that he should do it. I caught a horse—there were plenty of them that had lost their riders—and mounted the white brave with Sabaqua behind him to hold him on, and started them off North. I was then sure that we should all have to run that way as soon as it was light. The Indians were defeated. The great barrier was broken. It was my last fight. I put my body in the way. It was strong then, but it was not strong enough to stop the white men. They pushed it aside as I do this stick. I have never seen the place since where we fought that night. My heart was very big then. Tecumseh had filled it with gall. It has been empty ever since. I brought nothing from that bloody field but one bloody prisoner. I will show you where he sleeps one of these days. I am tired now. I have seen many snows since the great one when Me-won-i-toc brought the White Swan to die with her father. I thought my prisoner looked like her, and therefore I loved him and treated him like a brother. I can not tell you any more to-night."

## CHAPTER XI.

'Tis here the red men felt the white men's power.

Since my acquaintance with old Shobonier, and his tribe, I have never been at a loss for the causes that led to the battle of Tippecanoe. It was the first battle of "the war of 1812" with England, although it was fought seven months before its actual declaration, and with only two Britons present; but they were part of the real instigators of that war, and hostilities between the whites and Indians furthered the plans of the British in their designs upon the Americans. It was for a purpose that they made an ally of Tecumseh. Some of them had a great object in view. I believe that they intended, or at least hoped, to extend Canada westward to the Mississippi; making the Maumee of Ohio, and the Wabash of Indiana, the southern line. This was Tecumseh's ultimatum. He never would listen to any terms that did not grant all north of that line to the Indians. If the battle of Tippecanoe had not, for the Indians, been prematurely fought, it would have cost us a host of lives to dislodge them and their allies from the great territory that they claimed.

From personal conversations with Gen. Harrison, and those who were intimate with him in 1811, I know that he not only saw the importance, but the actual necessity of striking an early blow, heavy enough to crush the accumulating forces of the red men. He was busy all the Summer of that year getting information, principally through the Miamees and a few of the Pottowottomies south of the Wabash, who refused to join The Prophet, and in organizing a force sufficient to meet such a wily foe.

Elskatowwa also kept spies all the time about Gen. Harrison, either as traders, commissioners, or pretended friends, who came to give him information, but in the mean time to gain twice as much as they gave.

The Prophet's town was established at the mouth of the Tippecanoe, in the richest corn region of the world, for the purpose of growing and laying up large stores of this valuable grain, before hostilities should be commenced. They were commenced a year too soon to meet Tecumseh's views, having been precipitated by a class of Indians who had no forecast. As soon as war was talked of, they wanted to begin fighting, and therefore took every opportunity to cowardly murder some of the isolated families of frontier settlers. This hurried forward the grand catastrophe.

Some of those who lost relatives in the terrible battle of Tippecanoe, or who were opposed to the policy of the Government, or to Gen. Harrison personally, censured him severely for want of caution. They censured him wrongly. They said that it was incautious on his part to cross the Wabash, and march up on the side where the hostile Indians were gathered. In this they were mistaken. He was not incautious, and he was brave. He might have been deceived in the strength of the foe. He was deceived in the intelligence of his guides. He found, when a minute knowledge of the topography of the country was most needed, that they knew little or nothing. They had hunted over the ground, and knew how to guide themselves, and that was all. They did not comprehend that an army could not follow an Indian trail.

It is true that, compared with armies now-a-days, the first that marched up the Wabash was a very small one, but it was all that could be gathered in time to make the campaign before Winter. It would have aken one ten times as large a year later.

It was the intention of Gen. Harrison to march trong enough to fight the Indians, if necessary, or without fighting, to say to them, "You see my power; now submit and be peaceable, or die." Submission or death, were his only terms. To accomplish so much he was willing to risk his own life. It was not rashness; it was the predetermined act of a few brave men, who led a band of heroes.

No words are too strong for their eulogy. This is he opinion of those who were conquered upon the battle ground of Tippecanoe, and I believe it is neary the universal opinion of all Americans who have studied the facts of that campaign.

It was Gen. Harrison's intention to keep his march secret, and it was with a view to foil any arrangements that the Indians might make to stop him, that he crossed the Wabash and went up on the west side. We have seen that it was this movement that prevented The Prophet's peace commissioner from meeting him, for he was informed when the army marched, and its strength, as we have already learned from the testimony of one of his spies.

Gen. Harrison expected to be met either by hostile bands, or by a delegation that would urge him to stop and talk and delay, until too late in the season to advance.

The Prophet, not hearing from this delegation, began to think that it had been captured or killed, and sent out several scouts to gain information of the approach of the army.

Gen. Harrison, not having heard from the hostiles, began to hope that his march was unknown, and that he should find the Indians unprepared for battle. This opinion was dissipated at the crossing of Pine Creek, for there Indian scouts were seen whose conduct indicated that they were watching the approach of the army, and trying to ascertain its strength.

Indian scouts also came in here, in the interest of the whites, who reported that The Prophet was quite well aware of the time the army marched, and its progress and strength, and that it was quite useless to attempt any secrecy.

The scouts also reported that the policy of The Prophet was to pretend that he did not know of Gen. Harrison's approach, and had no idea of his coming with any hostile intent. It was to this end that he had forbidden any intercourse with the army. He wanted it to think that he was taken by surprise, and was wholly unprepared to fight. His greatest trouble in carrying out his subtle plans, was that he could not control his men.

As the army approached the Indian town that they had started to find, and destroy if the Indians refused the terms offered, the young warriors kept constantly in sight of the advance, and often made very insulting gestures, to try to provoke the men to commit the first acts of hostility. By order of Gen. Harrison, this was studiously avoided. No taunt, nor gross insult could induce a man to fire a shot.

On the 5th of November, 1811, the army encamped nine or ten miles from The Prophet's town, although it was not then supposed to be so far away. The guides that day had led the advance into some very dangerous defiles, where a small force of Indians, making a vigorous attack upon the marching column, might have thrown it into such confusion as to produce a disastrous defeat. On this account Gen. Harrison cautioned his officers to pay no more attention to these "blind guides," but exercise constant vigilance, and feel their way along, keeping as near the river as the ravines would permit. On this and the succeeding nights, he ordered men and officers to keep with arms in their hands, and the cavalry to ve their horses constantly by the bridle. "Let them do all their feeding by daylight," was one of precautionary orders.

November 6, the army moved forward some five miles. Still no town, although the guides had been telling that it would be seen at every turn for two or three days. Here such numbers of Indians were seen that a halt was ordered, and interpreters were sent forward to try to communicate with them, but they refused to talk, or pretended not to understand. The army was then ordered to advance, as much in line of battle as possible. This was very difficult, for the country was found full of deep ravines, and generally timbered, and so broken that marching was slow and tedious, and maneuvering quite impossible.

The appearance of the country did not yet correspond to the description given of the immediate vicinity of The Prophet's town, yet the General believed that it was very near, and felt unwilling to advance without ascertaining exactly the situation of the foe and his own army.

Perhaps I ought to say a word in explanation, before we march further, about the use of this term, *army*. Webster defines it: "1. A collection or body of men, armed for war. 2. A great number: a vast multitude." I have used the term only in its first signification, while I am fully sensible that a majority of my readers understand an army to mean "a great number: a vast multitude," like that of Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Foster, Butler, Thomas, Canby, and other of our great Union Generals.

The army which General Harrison assembled in the Summer of 1811 at Vincennes, and moved up and stationed at that then advanced and dangerous outpost of Terre Haute, was a very different affair. All told it did not exceed nine hundred men. There was Col. Boyd's regiment of about 300 "regulars," who came down in July from Pittsburgh; and about 500 militia, mostly from Kentucky, and a few independent volunteers. Of two of these I shall have much to say, by and by, for they become important characters in the romance of this history.

At Terre Haute—the French name of the place, given because the bank of the Wabash is high—a fort was constructed and named by the officers "Fort Harrison," in honor of the Governor. This was some sixty miles above Vincennes, and it was established to maintain the authority of the General Government over the territory which had been purchased by Governor Harrison, at a treaty made in the Summer of 1809, at Fort Wayne, with chiefs and head men of the Delawares, Miamies, Pottowottomies, Kickapoos, Weas, and Eel River Indians, which included all who ever pretended to have any claim to that region. Yet it was to this treaty and its cession of land, that Tecumseh and his party would not submit.

Tecumseh contended that all the Indians in the territory of Indiana, which included what now forms the States of Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan, had rights in all the country, and that no single tribe could sell its individual right. Upon this he based his hostility, and insisted that the treaty should be annulled.

The General Government determined to enforce the treaty at all hazards, and thus instructed Governor Harrison. But he was to avoid hostilities as long as possible.

The next Summer after the treaty, hearing of the Indians threats, the Governor sent for Tecumseh to visit him. He came with 400 armed warriors, and was very insolent, declaring that no white man should ever settle upon the ceded territory, which covered both sides of the Wabash, from a little above Vincennes, up to a point above Terre Haute, and eastward upon the White River. He also owned that he had threatened the lives of the chiefs who signed the treaty, and grossly insulted Winnemac, a friendly Pottowottomie chief, who was present to advise with the Governor. Brandishing his war club as a signal to arouse his warriors, Tecumseh told the Governor that he had cheated the Indians, and seemed anxious to provoke hostilities upon the spot.

The Governor had only twelve men as a bodyguard, yet they would have instantly fired upon the Indians if the Governor had not restrained them. He simply told Tecumseh that he was a bad man, and that it was beneath the dignity of the Governor to hold intercourse with him, and that he must at once leave the town. In short, he treated him with sovereign contempt, without exhibiting a particle of fear.

This fearless, calm conduct, of the Governor, had its desired effect upon the Indians. Tecumseh, the greatest Indian diplomatist that has ever been known, found his match, and had to come back the next day and beg the privilege of opening negotiations. He had undoubtedly hoped to provoke hostilities, and that would have given him sufficient justification, in the eyes of his English allies, to have massacred every white person in the town.

The next day he was remarkably cool and polite, but he had lost his prestige, just as all men do who lose their temper. He said that his words the day before were not his, but those of bad white men, who had given him evil counsel.

For a time it seemed as though the conference would terminate amicably. But when they began to talk about the new boundary, Tecumseh declared that he would adhere to none but the old one; and in this he was sustained by chiefs of the Wyandots, Pottowottomies, Ottawas and Kickapoos. The Pottowottomie was our old acquaintance, Shobonier, and the Ottawa, his father-in-law, Sabaqua.

At this time, General Harrison was only thirty-seven years old; but he had seen much service among the Indians; having been with Generals St. Clair and Wayne, in their great North-western campaigns. He was afterward commander of Fort Washington (now Cincinnati), which in 1795 was a frontier post. In '97 he was Secretary of the North-western Territory, embracing all north-west of the Ohio River. In '99 he was a Delegate to Congress from that Territory, and in 1801 he was appointed Governor of Indiana Territory, and General Superintendent of all the Indian tribes. This brought him in contact with a great many of the head men of the various tribes, and enabled him to put a fair estimate upon their character and disposition to be friendly or otherwise. It gave him a decided advantage over Tecumseh and his wily brother, who were undoubtedly two of the most powerful Indians of the age, and if they had not been checked in their influence over others, they would have soon acquired strength enough to drive back almost any force that could have been brought into their country.

In the Spring of 1811, General Harrison sent for Tecumseh again; he wished him to visit the seat of Government at Vincennes, that the force of argument might be tried once more, with the hope of stopping the Indian depredations upon the whites. One of the particular demands upon him was to give up two Pottowottomie murderers. He either disclaimed any knowledge of them, or else referred to his brother, who he said exercised all authority; which in a degree was true. At any rate, no good resulted from the "talk," and Tecumseh soon after left the country upon one of his missionary visits to the tribes in Georgia, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi, to enlist them in his great war. Hence his absence at the time of the battle of Tippecanoe.

General Harrison, from his knowledge of Indian character, was well satisfied that the Indians must be subdued by force, and that the sooner it was done the better. The powers at Washington hesitated, just as they did when the great slaveholders' rebellion commenced. They wanted to pursue the same temporizing policy, and try to conciliate the bloodthirsty wretches. Hence the waste of a whole Summer in getting together, what was then called, an army—an army of nine hundred men—an army so weak that it is a miracle that it was not annihilated.

This army left Fort Harrison October 28, with three companies of mounted riflemen—real back-woods hunters—in the advance. The time was fully two months too late. A visit of troops in mid-summer to the great Indian corn fields, on the Wabash and Tippecanoe River, would have inflicted irreparable damage, and prevented the concentration of forces, such as The Prophet had succeeded in drawing around him at his town, which was the objective point of the campaign. It was a waste of precious time, just such as we have seen so often during the war of the great Rebellion.

The delay was not the fault of the Commander-in-Chief. He knew how to deal with Indians. It was due to the temporizing policy that ruled at Washington. It was also due to the fact that it required nearly a month's time in 1811, to get a dispatch from Terre Haute to Washington and get an answer returned.

"In those days," there were no magnetic telegraphs, no railroads, no turnpikes, and much of the way no roads beside mere trails and marked trees to guide the traveler, and all dispatches sent by mail, went by "slow coaches."

Thus the precious time wore away till after frost had killed the feed for horses which is so abundant in woods and prairie in Summer. This was part of The Prophet's plan. He urged his commissioners to keep the troops back by any pretense possible to use, until cold weather. "Then," said he to Shobonier, "we will have all of our corn gathered and safely stored away, and all the grass will be dead, and we will burn it so that the whites can not come with horses—they are too lazy to come on foot. You must keep talking to them till it snows."

General Harrison, though young in years, was too old an Indian talker to be baited with such chaff, but his superiors held him back. They were even afraid that the advance up to Fort Harrison might be offensive to the Indians, and tend to "irritate" them.

We have seen a good deal of late years of the same kind of fear—fear of irritating Rebels.

This fear of "provoking hostilities," from a foe already murderously hostile, delayed the campaign to a period so late that it nearly caused its failure. It rendered it necessary to take along a train of wagons with grain for horses, to guard against the danger of getting into a burned district, where there would be nothing to sustain the cavalry, artillery, baggage and officers horses.

I have already given my readers a picture of a burning prairie, and such an effectual barrier against General Harrison's advance, would have been certainly used by The Prophet, if he could have gained sufficient time.

Fortunately the frosts were late that year, and the grass was still too green to burn on the 7th of November. I have seen it covered with snow while still in that condition. An early cold snow-storm, on the Grand Prairie, would be very fatal to an army.

All these facts were as well known to General Harrison, as to Elskatawwa, and the march intended to have been begun in August, was undertaken at the earliest day possible. The distance, I suppose by the route marched, was not far from a hundred miles, and it may be considered a rapid movement to accomplish that distance in a week, ferrying or fording streams, and making roads, or marching without them.

I forgot to mention the last "act of courtesy"—Gen. Harrison thought it one of humiliation, and so did The Prophet—was to send that chief a delegation offering terms of peace. It was received as though it came from a revolted tribe, and treated with indignity. That closed the door against negotiation.

We will now return to the night before the battle. The march all day had been very carefully conducted, as the situation seemed favorable for an attack from the Indians. Some officers and men who volunteered to ride forward to endeavor to ascertain the position of the town, and the disposition which The Prophet had made of the main body of his warriors, reported to the General, that every time they had attempted to move forward, a small body of Indians were discovered maneuvering to get between this advanced party and the main body, and whenever the horsemen attempted to head and hold intercourse with the Indians, they skulked back into the ravines, or bushes, or hid along the river bank.

"The red devils," said Mike the Hunter, "looked as ugly as she catamounts, and if we had taken our eyes off from them for a moment, would have pitched in just as quick as them varmints, when you are sort of stirring up their kittens. I wanted to shoot awful bad, but it was agin orders."

The "orders" were to gain a parley if possible, but not to expose the men to an attack, nor to make one. It seemed to be a leading object with the Governor, acting under instructions, to throw the odium of the attack, if blood must be spilt, upon the Indians. It was undoubtedly bad policy, so far as it involved the loss of life and danger of defeat of our brave men, but the result was grander in its effect upon the foe, as we have seen in its discouraging effect upon Shobonier, and his associates.

At length the advance discovered what was supposed to be the town, though it appeared much smaller than had been reported, and a disposition of the troops was ordered, either to attack or resist as it might be necessary. Further reconnoissance proved that what was supposed to be the main settlement, was only a collection of huts of some small tribe, that had located on the bank of the river a mile or two below the principal one, and that these huts were probably abandoned. It was a further sign that the Indians were "ugly."

The march was resumed. The General, as well as his officers and men, began now to feel a great anxiety. Night was at hand, and no camping ground had been selected, and if there had been any suitable place at hand, no order would have been given for that purpose, without ascertaining the disposition of the foe. The men would have been ordered when it became too dark to move on, to stand at their arms until daylight.

When about two miles from the town, the path, which was only an Indian trail, but a well worn one, led down a pretty steep hill, at the foot of which ran a small brook of clear water. Many an eye was cast about here to see if there was not a favorable camping ground upon the banks of the stream, good water being one of the essentials of a military camp. The ground upon the side that the army approached was rough and broken, and too much covered with leafy bushes for a camp where a dangerous foe might lurk in every bush. On the other side of the stream the ground was marshy. Beyond, there appeared to be a dry plain, with oak trees and bushes, and by moving to the right that would be reached and afford room for deploying the men, and if anything should occur to show that it would be safe to encamp, the men could probably get water from the Wabash, the line of which could be seen through the timber. To this end the force moved in that direction. It was met directly after by some of The Prophet's counselors, and head men, who pretended that he had just returned from a journey, and was greatly surprised and somewhat incensed to find a hostile army so near his town, after having sent peace commissioners to the Governor, only a week previous, with "assurance of his distinguished friendship."

It was explained that these commissioners had not been seen—that peace was all that was desired on the part of the whites—that they had not come with hostile intent, but in furtherance of an object suggested by The Prophet himself; that the Governor should come up in person with his army, and show the Indian warriors his great strength in their own country, which would enable him, The Prophet, to make a permanent peace, and fix upon a new boundary along the Wabash, and then bury the hatchet forever.

The Indians replied that all that was true, but they did not expect to see the Governor with quite so big a "body-guard," since he had objected to one that Tecumseh took with him, not half as large. Besides, as their town contained scarcely any body but women and children, such an army as the Governor had brought had frightened them so that many had begun to prepare to run away and hide in the swamps. They begged him not to march any nearer the town on this account, but to lie down and sleep where the army were, and then The Prophet and all the head men that they could get together upon so short a notice, would hold a talk with the white men and smoke the pipe of peace. On being asked the whereabout of the large band of warriors that The Prophet had there when the commissioners visited him a few weeks since, it was replied "they were scattered about the country, hunting, gathering corn and building wigwams for Winter."

"This," said Gen. Tipton, who related to me the interview, "was just such an error as I have often seen white men make, in proving a case in Court. They prove too much. They force their own witnesses to utter words that spoil their own case. It was so now. We knew that the rascals lied, because the warriors never do such menial work, as gathering corn and building wigwams—that is the work of the squaws. This part of the story put us on our guard."

The Indians were also told that some of Gen. Harrison's men had seen many armed warriors during the day, and wanted to know why they had been watching the army and why they would not talk!"

To this the envoys replied that "a company of Menomonies, had just arrived, and not knowing anything of the language, they could not answer, and they looked upon all white men with suspicion, or as enemies, and therefore might have conducted themselves improperly; but if so, The Prophet and his band were not accountable; and the offenders should apologize to-morrow."

"All this," said my informant, we knew to be a lie; but as there was a promise of peace until the next day, we felt disposed to accept it, as there was no time to lose if we were to get an encampent before dark. So the command was moved off toward the river, but getting into a jungle of falling trees, swung round toward the town, which produced a terrible outcry of women and children, who thought they were about to be attacked.

Another delegation now came to meet the Governor, to implore him not to make war upon defenseless women and children, in a town where there was not a hundred men.

The movement was explained, and the Indians were told that the army now were only desirous of finding a suitable camping ground for the night. The Indians pointed up the creek just crossed, to a very desirable spot, about a mile away from the town and separated from it by a marsh, or wet prairie.

Gen. Harrison was censured by some who commented upon the campaign for having allowed the Indians to select the spot for the encampment, where it would be favorable for them to attack. Those who supposed that the Indians selected the ground with a view to a favorable attack were entirely mistaken.

The Prophet did not intend to attack that night, Shobonier says that he opposed it, but was overruled by his counselors; that it was late in the night before the plan of attack was determined upon, and not until the spies, of whom Shobonier was one, had reported the disposition of the forces, and that Gen. Harrison had laid down to sleep without any greater protection than the most common soldier.

Up to this time it was Elskatawwa's plan to make a treaty and concede all that the whites demanded, even to giving up the two Pottowottomies, and thus allay all hostilities, and throw the army off its guard, and then attack it upon its return at some encampment and destroy it entirely. This, some of the young warriors declared that they could do now, with less than half of the available force, and they were unwilling to wait

It was also argued that if they did wait till morning, and should then hold a council with the whites, they would prove treacherous and seize The Prophet, and principal men and burn the town, and perhaps continue their march until they had destroyed all the corn and Indian settlements within reach. This decided the fate of white and red men who never saw the next morning's light.

As to the camping ground that was selected by two of the ablest officers on Gen. Harrison's staff, and their choice was approved by the commander and all subordinates, and afterward by the officers of another army that marched to the same spot the next year, and since by thousands of military men and civilians.

To give the reader some idea of the situation, let him set down a common smoothing-iron, such as every laundress uses, with its side to the southwest, and approach its point. Running along the edge upon its left side, is a small brook. Beyond the brook the ground is marshy. From the brook toward the camp the ground rises tolerably abrupt, ten to twenty feet high. This bank is covered with bushes. The face of the triangle is dotted with scattering trees; the soil is sandy, and descends gradually on your right hand to a marsh and wet prairie, and rises gently as you walk up northwesterly, where the timber increases in density, but is still so open that it does not afford much cover to a foe, nor prevent operations in that direction by cavalry.

Such was the camp and battle ground of Tippecanoe. There was no time to fortify, if it had been considered necessary; for it was seven o'clock before the troops got into position. There was a moon that night, but my informant did not recollect whether it was all night, or only in the latter part. He does remember that it was most of the time overcast, and that a drizzle of rain fell.

As fast as companies reached their position, rousing camp fires were built which served to light others to their places, and as beacons for the teams, which having been kept in the rear as the force advanced toward the village, had now to make a little detour around the marsh to reach the plateau, so that they were late in getting into their proper places, and forming a coral to guard the horses.

Cooking, eating, drinking coffee, smoking, talking and laughing went on as merrily that night as at any of the previous encampments, and no one anticipated an attack before morning, though a strong line of sentinels was established, and every man was ordered to sleep with his gun in his hand.

It was late in the night before the camp became still. The officers who were allotted to that duty, examined every point and saw that all the sentries were alive to the importance of vigilance, and reported to the commander that everything looked favorable for a quiet night. Then he lay down and slept a little, but he could not rest, he said, because he believed the Indians were playing false. He knew that twenty days previous, his scouts had estimated over a thousand armed warriors within easy call of The Prophet, at two days' notice, and he knew that he had been more than that time aware of the approach of an armed force. Gen. Harrison had no doubt these warriors were not far off now. He hardly thought that after seeing the force of the whites, and how well they were under discipline, and how well armed and equipped, the Indians would risk an attack. Yet he feared some treachery, some attempt to cut up his army in detail. He spoke to some of the gentlemen around his fire in the evening of the great importance, when they moved from there, of keeping close, with cavalry in front of the wagons, and infantry well up, and cavalry upon each flank, with especial care that there should be no opportunity for a body of Indians to break in at any point and divide the force and create a panic. He was sure from all that he had seen and heard, and from his long experience with Indian character, that these fellows meant mischief. Still, his "instructions" did not allow him to do what nearly every man present would have advised; that is, open on them in the morning without parley, disperse the warriors and burn the town. However, this course was not advised, not so much because it was contrary to instructions, but because it was contrary to the principles upon which Americans conduct warfare. They were saved any sacrifice of principles, for the Indians took the initiative.

Between three and four o'clock on the morning of November 7, Gen. Harrison found that the moon was obscured and a slight rain falling, and all around outside of the camp seemed so dark and utterly silent, that it appeared to him ominous of danger. He thought it just such a night as Indians would choose for an attack. He looked out over the encampment, and saw many of the fires burning brightly, which would greatly favor a foe. He thought of ordering them all put out, but he feared that would create alarm, and besides, as it would arouse all the men, they would be wet, cold and dissatisfied, and not in good condition for fighting, if that should become necessary; and he had such a strong presentiment that it would be, that the thought was so oppressive he could not sleep.

In this mood he sat over his fire, listening intently, as though he would catch some sound from the direction of the town, or some other that would give him an indication of approaching danger, and afford him some excuse for arousing the men from their slumbers. He disliked to disturb them without good cause. Yet he was so impressed with the idea that he should have cause, almost immediately, that he ordered an aid to awaken a drummer quietly and have him ready by the fire to beat the reveille at a moment's notice.

At this time there was such a deep silence all around—so perfectly still, that it was awful. The sentinels all seemed to have turned to statues, so intently were they listening. They had heard a low rustling sound, like a gentle stream running through the grass.

It was a chosen band of Indians, crawling half a mile upon their bellies like turtles or snakes. It was the band selected by Elskatawwa, to assassinate Gen. Harrison. And this band was closely followed by every warrior present, spreading out upon the marsh, and beyond the brook, so that the only escape for the affrighted men and horses would be up the base of the triangle, further into the Indian country, and upon ground favorable for the Indian mode of warfare.

In the midst of this silence, there was a flash, a report, a scream, and the General springing to his feet, cried, "to horse—drummer, now—with all your might"—and then a yell, as though all pandemonium had broken loose, and all this only occupying an instant of time.

In another instant almost every soul in camp was aware of that most terrible of all acts of warfare, a night attack of Indians.

The Prophet's chosen band of assassins had unexpectedly met a company of wakeful, watchful sentinels. One of them had been for several minutes listening to the singular sound made by the "snakes in the grass." Then he fancied that he saw the grass move. He was familiar with the character of Indians. This quick eared listener was "Mike the hunter." He had long been accustomed to peer into the dark, and had thus acquired a faculty of seeing objects where others could have discovered nothing. He stood near a bush, far in the advance of others, and could not be seen by the Indians. He had a sort of instinctive knowledge that if they intended an attack, they would make it this night, and would approach just in this way. So he watched. He was now satisfied that at least one Indian was crawling through the grass with the object of reaching the very bush behind which Mike stood. If he found a sentinel there the noiseless tomahawk would do its work, and the Indian, occupying the place, could stand up boldly and look around over the whole camp.

"I felt," said Mike, "a great desire to scratch my head. It itched around the scalp lock. I dared not stir, but I managed to raise my gun so as to rub my thumb nail across the flint, and throw back the leather cap used to cover the lock to keep my powder dry. Then I brought it up to my face, pointing toward the spot where I fancied I saw the grass wave. Just then the moon came out a little—just a corner, from behind the cloud—only for an instant, but in that instant I saw down there in the grass, the flash of a stray moon beam upon a bright piece of metal. I knew mighty quick that it was a new tomahawk; one that the English furnished to cut open American heads. I did not intend that it should cut open mine; so I instantly drew a bead upon the spot where I saw the thing glisten, and pulled trigger. Whew! didn't that Indian hop. He jumped higher than my head and cried like a stuck pig. It was all over now, with their secret movement. As soon as I fired, the grass was full of the red varmints, yelling like devils. Several other sentinels fired; I don't know whether they got any game; I know I did. It was a death yell that fellow gave; and it was a death knell to some of our brave boys, for it was followed by the most awful yelling that I ever heard, all around the camp. Our men sprang up, and as they stood in the light of their fires, the Indians had them as fair marks; and if they had been half as good at a long shot as I am, they would have killed half of us at the first volley. Truth is, though, that most of 'em had nothing but smooth bores, and I wouldn't be afraid to let one of the cowardly rascals shoot all day at me for sixpence a shot, at a distance that I would hit nineteen times in every twenty. I believe about fifty of them did have a fair crack at me, a little after, for I shot at a red skin who had come up to one of our fires from which the men had fallen back, to fix his gun, and I cracked away at him, and tumbled him over and thought I had killed him, and I had such a notion to have his scalp, that forty horses could not hold me back. So I ran right up to the fire where he lay, and up he jumped and ran away. I had only cut off one ear. I saved that, though, and threw his gun on the fire. Lord! how the balls did rattle round me. As I could not fire back, I just made the most insulting gesture that I knew how to make to an Indian, and deliberately walked back to my comrades."

And there were many others, though not quite as reckless, who were as brave as Mike Haskins. They stood the fierce onslaught of the Indians nobly. Their first fire killed and wounded more than all their shots for hours after. Only one part of the line fell back and left their fires, and that was altogether rather an advantage, for it exposed to death a good many Indians, who came into the light.

One of the first orders of Gen. Harrison was to put out the fires. Several men fell while engaged in this duty.

There was at one time, but only for a moment, a little panic, when it was found that Indians were in the camp among the white men, and that it was difficult to tell friend from foe. This was part of the plan of The Prophet to kill Gen. Harrison. His life was saved by the yell of the Indian shot by Mike. The General sprang for his horse—his favorite gray. He had been frightened by the alarm and pulled up the stake and moved out of the way.

The consequence was that Gen. Harrison mounted a dark-colored horse, and Col. Owen was shot in his stead, because he rode a white one.

It was an incredibly short space of time from the first alarm, before every man was up and in his place. The General rode rapidly up and down the lines, to encourage the men to remain firm—to put out fires—to lie down—not to fire at random—but to hold the Indians in check until daylight, assuring all that it was their only safety, and that they should surely drive them like sheep, as soon as it was light enough.

To impress the whites with fear, the Indians occupied much ground, and made a peculiar kind of music, by rattling deer-hoofs together. These were signals of attack—to advance or fall back upon one side while the other crept up and delivered fire into the camp.

Fortunately, these signals were understood by some of the whites, and movements were regulated accordingly.

The desperadoes who entered the camp hastened out again as soon as the signal was given that the object was accomplished—that the man on the white horse had fallen. Several of them, however, lost their lives in this undertaking, and so did some of our men, for they were found tomahawked together.

After the first excitement was over, and the men learned that in firmness rested their only hope of success, the Indians might as well have tried to drive the oak trees from the places where they were rooted to the earth. This they learned to their cost; for they advanced several times with such horrid yells, that one unaccustomed to their ways might have supposed their number great enough to entirely overwhelm our little army. But they could not stand the showers of lead that came from the simultaneous fire of a battalion.

Toward daylight the Indians seemed to have withdrawn from the point and two sides of the triangle next to it, but this did not lessen the vigilance of the whites. It enabled them to move down and put out the fires that had been left burning, and to reoccupy that portion of the line, so as to close up a a gap.

Directly there was an alarm on the other side, at the base, as it were of the camp. The Indians were approaching in force, and occupying the trees, from which they could pick off our men and horses without danger to themselves. It was of the most vital importance that they should be dislodged at once.

Although it was like leading a folorn hope, in which the leaders would be almost sure to fall there were men ready for the sacrifice. Maj. Jo. Davis and Col. White, led this desperate cavalry charge, and both died the death of heroes for their country.

The men all vied with their officers, and rode directly up to the savages, cleaving them with their swords, or trampling them under their horses' feet.

It was not in human nature—Indian nature—to stand before such a charge, and they broke and ran to the nearest hiding places, and the battle, except a few shot from lurking individuals, was over. The Indians were totally routed—awfully defeated—terribly disappointed.

If our forces had known how great was the victory obtained, they could have taken a thousand women and children and wounded warriors prisoners. They were awaiting in the town the end of the battle and the reception of all the white men as prisoners that were not killed upon the battle ground. They had not a particle of doubt about the success of the attack. Their disappointment could hardly be conceived, when messengers came one after another, from The Prophet, telling them to fly for their lives, and hide from the fury of the victorious white men.

I have been assured that some of the fugitives of this battle-field never halted until they reached the Great Kankakee Swamp, sixty or seventy miles north. The women left the town without stopping to secure any food, clothing, blankets, or any loose property. Even guns and ammunition, that had been stored there, were left to the conquerors.

It was thought to be the better part of valor not to move at once upon the town, as it was known to be located upon high ground, surrounded by fallen trees and other obstructions, so as to make it a post of no mean strength; and it was certainly supposed that the Indians would gather there for a final struggle. The charge in which Maj. Davis and Col. White fell, was so sudden, unexpected and furious, that it forced the Indians back so far they could not concentrate at the town; and after their line was thus broken, the chiefs lost all control, and each man tried to save his own particular scalp. So the town was cowardly abandoned to its fate—to the fate, in the course of the day, of a grand conflagration, with all the mass of valuable Indian property and corn there accumulated; the stores of Winter and material of war.

Thus ended the battle of Tippecanoe—the greatest and most important Indian battle that had up to that time been fought in the North-West. As soon as it was over and the result known, Gen. Harrison called his surviving officers to a council of war, to determine what should be done.

Sixty whites dead, and one hundred and twenty wounded, and a few missing were reported. It was never known how many Indians were killed and wounded, as their custom is to carry them off as fast as they fall. Forty were found dead; none wounded, though marks of many were seen, and it was subsequently ascertained that their loss was nearly 300. This was in a measure confirmed by the number of guns found, which they had been unable to carry off. It required all the strength of the squaws to carry away the wounded and dead men, which they did upon their backs and upon Indian litters, made of two poles fastened like wagon thills, one each side of a horse, the ends dragging on the ground, or else fastened to another horse. A piece of matting lashed from pole to pole makes a couch, or a place to carry burdens.

As it was not known how much the force of the enemy was demoralized, nor whether he might not renew the attack, and on account of the wounded, the army could not march further; the council therefore determined that a speedy return to Fort Harrison was advisable.

The wagons were unloaded of everything not necessary for the march, and the wounded were placed upon beds of leaves, grass and blankets, and made as comfortable as possible, and everything that could not be carried away, that could be of any use to the Indians, was committed to the flames; and many were the manly tears shed over the bodies of the brave comrades that must be left behind. Then the army moved away from the bloody ground and smoking ruins, upon their retrograde march down the Wabash.

Some incidents connected with this great battle, I must leave for another chapter of my Indian stories.

I beg leave here to assure those who like the romance of love, courtship, and marriage, incident to novelists' stories, better than Indian wars, that their taste shall be satisfied before the story ends.

## CHAPTER XII.

Frontier traveling, as well as adversity, makes us acquainted with strange bedfellows.

Before the battle of Tippecanoe, the Indians were all buoyant with hope, and confident of success. Tecumseh and the Prophet had filled them, as by a magnetic power, with their own opinions. "Union," they preached to all the tribes, "is all that is necessary to insure our supremacy over the hated Americans." That is union among themselves, and union with the British.

The Prophet had repeatedly assured his dupes that he had the power of "charming" the guns of the enemy, until they would have no ability to kill his warriors; and hundreds of them went into the fight with Gen. Harrison, fully relying upon what this great impostor had told them being the truth. The very night before the battle he went through a variety of mummeries and enchantments to prepare the great work of secret assassination. His arts and intentions were all frustrated by the quick eye and steady hand of "Mike the Hunter." The first shot broke the spell and proved that the Prophet was no prophet. Nor was he a brave, for he did not join the warriors in their attack upon the camp, but kept himself in a sort of temple, engaged in his incantations, which were to secure the victory to his men. If they had been successful there would have been no limit to the Prophet's power, and the mischief that would have resulted, independent of the sacrifice of the army of Tippecanoe, would have been incalculable.

Providence aided brave men to break that power forever. Three days after the battle, the man who had an unlimited sway three days before over all the North-Western tribes, could not muster 100 warriors. The majority who fought in the battle of Tippecanoe withdrew from the alliance forever. Many, beside Shobonier, had fought their last battle. Many others would never have raised the tomahawk against white men after this, but for the influence of British agents and Tecumseh's eloquence.

This chieftain was in Georgia or Florida at the time of the battle, and knew nothing of it or its results until late in the Winter. He did not meet with the success that he had hoped for upon his mission, and he returned sad and dispirited with the little body-guard that accompanied him on his trip South. He crossed the Ohio River near Shawneetown, and kept up the edge of the Grand Prairie, thus avoiding all the settlements on the Wabash. Opposite the point where the river bends eastward from its general north and south course, the party struck off east and crossed over to the south side to visit some friends at Shawnee prairie.

It was night when they crossed the army trail, or Tecumseh would have read in it the explanation why he did not find his friends where he expected to meet them. He thought that for some reason the Prophet had called in the scattering families, concentrating them around his town. He did not dream of the great disaster that had fallen upon that town. He did not look about him the next day with the usual sagacity of an Indian, who reads a long history in a few little signs such as a white man might pass unnoticed. He arrived after dark in the evening on the site of the Prophet's town, without having met a single soul to give him any information. His heart had begun to misgive him. How it must have sank down to the zero of despair when he neither saw a light nor heard one sound of life, where but a few months before he had left such a stirring community.

No one can ever know the dreadful thoughts that agitated the breast of that savage, yet great man. Great, in the full acceptation of the word, as any of our great generals. Napoleon the first was not greater nor more unfortunate than Tecumseh.

"In a single moment," as he afterward told Shobonier, "I realized that I was a ruined man. My mission to my mother's native land and her brothers had failed. I could not induce them to come where *the water turns to stone*, and the rain comes from the clouds in showers of white wool and buries every green thing out of sight. I had shut my eyes all the way so as not to see the beautiful country that would soon be trampled under the feet of the hated white men. I was going from a sunny clime to one of ice and snow, and I thought that although it might lie deep and cold upon the roof of my wigwam, I should find a warm fire within. And that thought kept me warm through all the chilly nights of that long journey. If I was hungry, I said I can bear it, for I know that my people on the Wabash have plenty of corn, and my friends, the English, give them great stores of cloth, blankets, guns, and powder for their furs. But when I came to this land of plenty, and looked for my warm home and my young wife to welcome me, I heard no voice and saw nothing but darkness. Then my heart was black. I knew at once the cause of all this desolation. I saw the marks of the great white general that I had defied in his own council house, in every blackened brand of the burned town. I stood upon the ashes of my own home, where my own wigwam had sent up its fire to the Great Spirit, and there I summoned the spirits of the braves who had fallen in their vain attempt to protect their homes from the grasping invader, and as I snuffed up the smell of their blood from the ground, I swore once more eternal hatred—the hatred of an avenger. I am now going to strike these foes. Will my red brethren go with me?"

A few went, not all, for the charm that had held them fast to the great chief was broken. He might swear vengeance over his ruined wigwam, and all the homes of his people, but he could not wipe out the blood of that battle-field, nor heal the festering wounds of a hundred disabled warriors. Nor could he regain his lost prestige. If in a single moment he realized that he was a ruined man, he continued to realize it all his life.

He no longer declared that Elskatawwa was a Prophet, and possessed of supernatural powers and knowledge. He called him by a most degrading epithet, that means far more than "fool."

The next Summer after the battle of Tippecanoe, war was declared between the United States and England, and then Tecumseh appeared in a new character—a Brigadier-General in the British service, and Commander-in-Chief of all the Indian allies of that power. He fought a severe battle at Fort Meigs, Ohio, May 5, 1812, and another perfectly desperate at the Moravian Towns, on the River Thames, Canada, in the Autumn of 1813, where he laid down his life, fighting for his country, and to avenge wrongs which he felt had been inflicted upon him by the Americans.

His age is uncertain, but he was still a young man at the time of his death, strong and hearty, well-formed in body, limbs, and features. His hight was about five feet ten inches and always erect.

It was claimed, in the way of glorification to Col. Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky, that Tecumseh met his death at the hands of the Colonel, but it has since been proved that this could not have been true, and it never will be known to whom the country is indebted for its riddance of such a powerful and dangerous, though not despicable foe. Peace to his spirit! If we cannot honor his memory, let us not forget that he was, for a savage, an honorable enemy—more honorable than some of our own brothers have proved in the present war. He never killed his prisoners by the slow and torturing process of starvation. My informant assured me that of all things, Tecumseh hated a contemptible villain and a liar. If he had been our friend we should have honored his memory. He was our enemy, and worse than that, he was—"nothing but an Indian."

Facts of history show the effect of the great battle upon the Indians who were at Tippecanoe. In the Summer of 1812, eighty of the principal warriors who fought so desperately in the previous Autumn, went down the Wabash to meet Gen. Harrison in the fort at Terre Haute, to sue for peace. Shobonier and several other Pottowottomie chiefs represented the "prairie Indians" of that tribe. Sabaqua and others of the Ottawas represented such of that tribe as lived out of the influence of mischief-making Canadians. "Old One Ear," as he was ever called after Mike Haskins had "made his mark," spoke for a small family of Delawares, but I am sorry to say that they did not keep their promises, since Mike says "they were badly mixed up in the Fort Dearborn massacre," from which he made a most miraculous escape. Perhaps, by-and-by, I may tell how.

By the treaty of Fort Harrison some valuable allies were secured to us, and a strongly-marked line made between the hostile and friendly Indians of the region that had been firmly held in the grasp of Tecumseh and his brother up to the dawn of the 7th of November, 1811.

I have still something more to relate of incidents connected with the battle of Tippecanoe, and of those who were engaged; but now I shall speak of white men.

Among the volunteers were two travelers who arrived at Vincennes only a few days before the Governor left for Fort Harrison to organize the army for its march into the Indian country. As these two gentlemen had very strongly-worded letters from some of Gen. Harrison's Ohio friends, they were of course, most courteously received, and made acquainted with the objects of the campaign.

They had come to view the country with a design of making extensive purchases of land, whenever is should be offered, and also to establish themselves in mercantile business or manufacturing, if they were pleased with the prospects of this almost unknown land. It was quite natural that Gen. Harrison, as Governor of the Territory should desire to induce such persons as these to select it as a future residence. He found that they had ridden from Cincinnati, the most of the way through deep forests, which to them seemed likely to be forests forever. The little settlements which they had found were sparse and poor, and they thought much of the land appeared unpromising. The Governor spoke of the "new purchase" that he had made of the Indians the year before, in the most glowing terms—of the beautiful prairies and groves just as every appreciative man must speak. He told them of soil, naturally so rich, that Indian-corn fields had failed to exhaust the surface in such a long series of years that no one could tell the beginning. Then there were such gushing springs, such crystal streams, such power of water, such wealth of timber, that no one could travel over this "Wabash country," without feeling that it might support an empire.

"But the Indians, Governor, they are in possession. When will they be driven back so that your Empire can be settled? All this richness is worthless without people. When will they come?"

"Next year. They have begun to come already."

"True, and have been murdered or robbed and driven from their new homes."

"True, also; and now we are going to drive back the Indians. I will break their power before I am a month older."

"Or die in the attempt, you should have added."

"True again. But if I die, others will have to effect the object. I shall be accompanied by some very brave men. Perhaps you, gentlemen, may be willing to join a company of noble volunteers. You say that you have camped out during the most of your journey, and rather like the excitement. I advise you to continue it. You will then see if I have exaggerated in my description of the region that we shall traverse. I repeat that it is the fairest portion of America. It is one that must not be surrendered to savages. Those from whom I have purchased it, are willing to give it up. It is only those who have no just claims that are troublesome. If they stand in the way of our advance, they must be wiped out. I shall be very happy, gentlemen, to have your company."

"Then we will go. How soon?"

"I shall leave here to-morrow for Terre Haute, where we have a fort You can accompany me, or follow at your leisure with other volunteers a week hence. I wish to start the expedition at the earliest moment possible."

Perhaps the reader will pardon me for taking the opportunity during this halt to relate a little anecdote about an incident that befel our travelers during their journey from Cincinnati to Vincennes, that did not tend to give them a very favorable impression of the enterprise of the early settlers of Southern Indiana.

They fell into company with Judge Parks, H. P. Thornton, Gen. Tipton, Henry Farnham, Caleb B. Smith, and some half-dozen others, members of the bar in those early days of long circuits and log-cabin court-houses, on their way to hold a term in one of the newly-organized counties, after which it was the avowed intention of several of the party to join Gen. Harrison, if he had determined upon moving upon the Indians. It was, perhaps, owing to the backwoods traveling acquaintance with these gentlemen that our two travelers concluded to join the expedition, for they had found them "jolly companions, everyone."

They rode upon this trip one stretch of seventy miles between court-houses, and only one house upon the trail, and that on the bank of a stream (probably one of the White Rivers), where the occupant of the cabin had established a ferry. The day on which the "court and bar" reached this "convenient stopping-place," had been a most uncomfortable one; a drizzling, chilly rain having fallen all day, and the "beech-slashes" were covered with water, and some of the creek-bottoms with mud, knee-deep to the horses, intermixed with roots and broken logs that made riding slow, tiresome, and dangerous. Then there were fords where horses had to leap down high banks upon one side, and scramble up muddy ones on the other. Sometimes the creek beds were lined with stones rough and slippery, in deep swift currents; and sometimes dark and sluggish with mud below the belly-deep water, that threatened to hold a horse fast, or cause him to pitch his rider headlong beyond the horse's ears.

It was a hard day's work to make this thirty-five miles. It was the hardest in the whole experience of one of the two travelers mentioned, who, having been born in Connecticut, and but a short time resident in Ohio, had as yet known but little of real backwoods traveling. It is not wonderful that they did not express themselves very enthusiastically in favor of the Indiana Territory.

The company arrived at "the half-way house" after dark. Some of them expected to find "accommodations for man and beast." So they did, such as they were; but our Connecticut friend said only fit for beasts: not for men, nor civilized horses.

The house was just such a one as that in which Jo. Spraker counted the Indians, except that in this case there were two of them joined together, with a fire-place at each end, made after the approved mode of log-cabin architecture, where there are no stones, and of course no brick. Shall I tell you how? that is, you who have never had the "advantages of education" enjoyed by the writer of these stories, who has been one of the pioneers upon the frontier, when the frontier was near where the battle of Tippecanoe was fought, and where the Fort Dearborn massacre occurred; and where several families fell victims to the hate of the savages, who were afterward defeated by Gen. Scott and his men in 1832, in "the Black Hawk war."

But, to return to the fire-place. A portion of the logs at one side is cut away, so as to leave an opening eight or ten feet wide—sometimes wider—and six or seven feet high. Then a crib is built up outside of this opening, generally of split stuff, like three sides of a great box. This is attached firmly to the ends of the logs, and the pieces being notched together at the corners make the fabric permanent. Then another frame is built inside of the exact size and form of the desired fire-place, and the space filled with clay, slightly moistened, and tamped together very compactly, so that, if well done, and allowed a little time to season, before removing the inner form of the mold, it makes a good fire-place that will last a dozen years.

The upper part of the chimney is made by placing a log of the most incombustible kind of wood for a mantle—the best of all for this purpose is butter-nut (*juglans alba*)—and upon this and the clay back and jambs of the fire-place a structure is erected, with sticks about the size of those which New-York farmers sell to all who buy pressed hay; that is, about as big as my arm, and those sticks are laid up with alternate layers of clay mortar in masses, each one about the size of a large cat; hence the name, "cat-in-clay-work." The bunches of clay, while soft, being pressed down so as to cover the sticks, and smoothed inside and out, make a durable, good chimney, and not very uncouth in its appearance, but that it stands outside and unconnected with the house, except at the base. When carelessly built such a chimney is certainly not handsome, and is rather liable to take fire. But that it is not considered dangerous for it to do so may be inferred from the fact that a traveler passing such a structure, and seeing the wood-work of the chimney on fire, ran in great haste to the door and cried out, “Sir, your house is on fire.”

“Oh, yes, I know it. I am going to put it out after I have done my breakfast. Won't you sit by, stranger, and take a snack with us? Tom, you had better go now down to the spring and get some water. I do hear it sort o' snapping up there. Reckon you ain't used to this 'ere sort o' houses, stranger?”

The “stranger” felt that it would be a new sensation to sit cooly eating one's breakfast, kowing that the house was on fire.

The truth is, that these ill-made wood and clay chimneys often take fire, and sometimes have to be pushed over to save the rest of the house. I have often seen holes burned through as large as a man's head, which remained open ever after. Sometimes the wooden crib is used without any attempt to build up a clay fireplace. That was the case in the cabin of the ferryman, where our company of travelers arrived after dark, in a cold, rainy October night. One of the foremost of the company hailed the house after the true back-woods Western style.

“Halloo! Who keeps house?”

A dark-faced, wooly-headed African emerged about halfway from the door of one of the fire lighted rooms, and answered:

“Dat you, Mas Johnson?” seeing several horsemen, he immediately added, by way of soliloquy, “Oh no, dat not you. Dis chile see dat now, plain nuff, case Mas Johnson am only one man, and dis am a heap of gemmen. Well, 'spose de gemmen wants to cross de ferry, but dat am done go dis night, nohow.”

“The nigger” as his master called him, was soon made to comprehend that the “gemmen” did not care to cross the ferry in the night and continue their ride through the rain and mud, but that they wanted shelter, fire and food, and care for themselves and horses. Seeing the number constantly increasing, as one after another rode up, the darkey began to estimate ths capacity of the premises.

“Mighty bad chance for so many gemmens, case dat 'ere stable hold only two, and dis ere house am powerful small for ten horses, and de udder one am right smart full of de missus and children, an my ole mam an her two.”

The “missus” hearing the talk made her appearance in the light of the other door, which exhibited an interior view of kitchen, dining-room, bedroom, and common room for the mistress and her six or seven tow-headed children, each clothed in his or her single cotton garment, rather the worse for long wear without washing, and “the nigger's old mam,” and her other two children; a pretty goodly-sized family for one small room, which was afterwards increased by the master and his two big dogs.

The woman wanted to know why the black boy didn't “stop his jaw and ax the gentlemen to light and gather in, as they have got to stay all night, in course, and no mistake.” She told him to “flax round and tie the horses to the trough, and give 'em some corn. As to roughness, they hadn't a bait.”

Some of the company thought there was plenty of “roughness” all around, though she meant that they had no rough feed for the horses, such as hay, straw, and corn-blades, or “shucks.”

As to the chance for supper, that depended wholly upon whether her “old man” got back from mill, and had any luck in getting some venison. She began to think the chance “mighty slim,” but if he didn't come, she would make “the nigger” go to the field, over the river, and dig some taters, and she guessed they'd have to put up with that anyhow.

Fortunately, several pairs of saddlebags were provided against such an emergency as this, and these with saddles, bridles, blankets, and two or three buffalo skins, were, with their owners, soon stowed away, or hung up to dry around the walls of “the spare room”—spare of everything but a few rough benches and something that stood for a bed in one corner. There was, however, a most ample fireplace; ample because “the nigger” had never found time to fill up the wooden crib with stones or clay; only a small pile against the back, leaving the jambs quite exposed to the fire, as the wood was never cut to fit, but used as lengthy as it could be got in, and consequently had burned out a hole upon one side, as big as a barrel. Still there was in this great smoke-colored cabin a glowing fire, and that is a most comfortable sight for a tired, cold, and wet traveler. The greatest feeling of discomfort was on account of the poor horses, which had to stand “at the trough” a big hollow beech log set up on forked posts without shelter from the storm, to spend the night without “roughness,” but fortunately with plenty of corn.

At length the quadrupeds were disposed of as well as it was possible to care for them under such circumstances, and the bipeds were gathered in front of the great cavernous fire-place, in which the cheerful fire crackled among the broken limbs of beech and sugar-maple, which had been gathered from “the dead-nin,” in such lengths as to require but little chopping; since that, and all other hard work had to be done by the dark colored part of the family; because “Massa Johnson,” being from “the Carolinas,” considered it highly derogatory for a white man to labor who was “able to own niggers.” He had come here fully expecting that the labor of the “old woman and her young ones,” would be quite sufficient in the region of such rich land, to support him and his family, in all coming time, and he was violently opposed to “the Guv'ner,” because he was not in favor of making this a slave State. On this account all his Indian policy was condemned; and by men of this class, the conduct of the battle of Tippecanoe was spoken of as one of the greatest blunders, or crimes, of the age. By them, Gov. Harrison was charged with being the murderer of all who fell upon that bloody ground.

At length, when the company were about on the point of spreading out the contents of their saddle-bags, to appease their sharp appetites, they heard outside, the bustle of a new comer, who called out authoritatively for “the nigger,” to come out and bring in the meal and venison, which assured the travelers that a genuine, rough, hearty, backwood's supper was in prospect.

In an almost incredibly short space of time, a portion of this coarse meal of new corn was converted into most deliciously sweet bread; the meal being slightly sifted and mixed with water only, into a stiff dough, and molded so that three lumps would just fill the bottom of a large iron bake-oven, which was then almost buried among coals. These triangular loaves when baked are called “dodgers,” and together with slices of venison, continuously transferred from the gridiron to the table, constituted the supper; not forgetting the inevitable coffee-pot. Butter and milk were not present, owing to the dread of that terrible disease too well known to many of the early settlers of the North-Western Territory, under the name of “milk sickness.” The potatoes that had been hinted at as a dernier resort were still in reserve where they grew, so that the supper was such a one as many an old settler, or traveler, remembers with feelings that make him yearn for “one more of the same sort.” Nothing but bread, meat and coffee, with the very few utensils necessary, were on the table, and as that was too small for all the guests, its dimensions were increased by a board extending to one of the beds, while another bed upon the other side was used as a seat by four of those who sat at the table.

As it was not over ten feet from the table to the fire, the food came to it hot—one of the requisites with both venison and corn bread, which makes such a meal delicious.

During the supper, the family was thus divided. The stout negro boy and the largest of the children, white and black, took to the travelers' room, and spent the time in an amazed examination of all the paraphernalia there exhibited. “The missus” had to care for one child at the breast and two or three that looked as though they had been prematurely crowded away from that source of infantile enjoyment; the colored woman attended to the dodgers and venison; and “massa Johnson” poured out the coffee.

It was such a meal as our Conneticut traveler had never met with before, nor ever enjoyed another so much. To the others, it was not new. By all, however, it was relished as simple meals always are by hungry men.

To those not accustomed to similar scenes, there might have been some embarrassment about how to lodge these men. The family of white and black was, certainly, quite enough for the room where the cooking and eating were performed, and there was but one bed in the other, and there were ten men to sleep; and sleep they did, comfortably, though they awoke rather too early, from a somewhat singular cause.

For their bed, blankets and buffalo skins were spread upon the floor before the fire, reserving a blanket for each man for covering. The bed was taken apart and used for bolsters and pillows, assisted by saddles and saddle-bags, and finally, at a late hour, all were sound asleep, with a bright fire glowing upon their closely packed couch.

One of the last acts, before lying down, had been to increase the stock of fuel, by removing a number of sticks of wood, which had been stuck into the burnt hole in the side of the fire-place, for the purpose of keeping the pigs out.

The rain still poured, and reminded 'Squire Thornton of a similar night spent by him and Judge Parks, "on the circuit," without any shelter; and he contrasted the comfort of the present lodging with the discomfort of that night. As the ground was wet, they had each of them peeled a section of bark from a large tree to sleep upon and each tried to form a shelter with his umbrella. "The Judge" said he, "being only about as thick as my blanket, and just as pliable, wound himself around the handle of his umbrella, and slept like a 'possum all night; while I was continually shoving out into the rain, first one leg and then the other, and when I tried to keep both legs under cover, out went my head, just far enough to take the full drip of the roof across my neck. But that was not all of my trouble. The Judge was an old 'coon, and understood camping better than I did. He put his bark with the smooth side to the ground, and I laughed at him. I determined to have the benefit of the smooth side to sleep on. So I did, the full benefit. The weight and heat of my body caused the bark to try to resume its natural curve. The consequence was, that before morning I found myself lying in a trough of cold water. Whereupon I think I may have sworn a little. I am sure the Judge, this sedate looking gentleman, must have made his old sides ache, even if the rough bark did not, laughing at me and my canoe."

At length, anecdotes were exhausted, laughter grew silent, and all slept; oh how sweetly!

It must have been nearly morning when one of the company by the name of Sheets, a powerful six foot Kentuckian, and rather quick tempered, was heard to say: "Confound you, Cale, [the late Hon. Caleb B. Smith,] if you don't lie over, I'll hit you a poke in the ribs. I have pushed you off half a dozen times and you grunt a little, like a hog, and roll back again."

At that he gave his troublesome bedfellow another shove, at which Cale, as he thought, gave such an unmistakable swinish grunt, that Sheets lost his temper, and springing up, seized the offender by the hair and brought him by one jerk to an upright position into the light of the waning fire, which had burnt low, but by the force of a vigorous kick, was made to shoot up a bright flame just as all the sleepers started up to see what the row was. Then followed such a roar of laughter as effectually banished all sleep for the remainder of the night. And well they might laugh, for the scene was ludicrous beyond imagination.

In the glaring fire light Sheets was standing, holding in his two strong hands a great slab-sided, long snouted old sow, of the real alligator breed, which was squealing at the top of her voice, and trying her best to bite her captor, who was safe while he held her at arm's length, but he dared not loose his hold, for fear that he might get the worst of the fight.

At length, before his companions were quite thrown into convulsions, he succeeded in throwing his antagonist into the fire. Doubtles both parties were glad enough to part, though it was necessary for the man to spring quickly out of the path of the furious beast. Not liking the way he carried on war by fire, she made a dive for the hole through which she had entered to seek shelter from the rain. Probably she went back to her own family to relate a doleful history of "the lost cause."

It is unnecessary, perhaps, to say that this extra lodger in the travelers' room left a strong odor of burnt hair, when she made her sudden exit without waiting to pay for her part of the "accommodations for man and beast," which she had enjoyed among the warm blankets of the sleepers.

"The row" brought "Massa Johnson" out of bed in such a hurry that he appeared upon the scene in the same costume in which he clothed his children, i. e., a cotton shirt. He was followed by "the nigger" in the same style of dress, which certainly added to the picturesqueness of the backwoods scene, while the alarm and squalling of the children in the one room, coupled with the boisterous mirth of the other, made up a very noisy, if not musical entertainment.

After ascertaining the cause of the commotion, the host undertook to apologize for the intrusion, by charging it all to "that nigger," "the lazy dog, for not building up the fire-place a year ago, and for not stopping this hole when it first burnt out last Spring; and if the gentlemen would say the word he would just take him out and larrup the rascal with a hickory rod, until he would squeal louder than the old sow." As the gentlemen could not see how this would mend the hole, that part of the entertainment was respectfully declined; and instead of spending his strength, "larruping a nigger," he was advised to use the strength of both in attentions to the horses. But this the master could not be induced to do; it was enough for him to "oversee" the slave, and thus husband his strength to curse the Governor for opposing the introduction of such a patriarchial institution, as would enable every white man to keep a nigger, upon whom he could pour out his wrath, and enjoy all the advantages of doing nothing himself, nor ever having anything done for him. Yet he clung to the institution with all the tenacity incident to those who by accident or (ill) fortune, happen to come into the possession of "an old woman and her brats," as Johnson described this part of his property.

One of the good effects of the compulsory rising of the company, was an early breakfast, which was an exact counterpart of the supper, and was relished with almost equal satisfaction. For this entertainment of man and horse, lodging and all its accompaniments, the charge was twenty-five cents each. This showed the estimate of values in that region fifty years ago.

When the company were about to start, it was observed that Judge Parks was not quite ready, but said, "go on, gentlemen, I, will soon be with you;" and when he came up they noticed that he had added a clean sack to his baggage, containing something, which one of the company said looked as though there might be a peck of ears of corn in one end, and and a jug of whisky in the other; and many were the jokes cracked at his expense; all of which he good-naturedly parried, without disclosing the contents of the mysterious bag.

The rain had passed away, leaving its marks everywhere visible in swollen streams and puddles of water and muddy paths—roads there were none, unless you called a line of marked trees and a few wagon ruts and horse tracks by that name.

However, the bright sun and brisk October wind, soon dried off the surface and made the traveling more pleasant than it was the day before, and the company pressed on, hoping to reach their destination before night; where they expected to find the usual extra preparations for the comfort of the court. Some of the company amused themselves to see the Judge, and a companion pushing ahead, as though they were anxious to anticipate the good tavern cheer that awaited them. They were simply trying to cross a certain creek—"an old acquaintance of mine," said the Judge, before it became unfordable. They were too late, and the party in the rear were surprised when they came in sight, to find that the two horsemen, whom they had charged with a desire to run away from the rest of the company, had not only halted, but had stripped their horses and turned them loose to feed, and were already engaged in making a camp fire.

"This," said the Judge, as the party rode up and looked on with amazement, "is Hotel Necessity; and you may alight, or sit your horses till the water falls, which will be in about twelve hours—say three o'clock to-morrow morning. In the mean time, make yourselves comfortable, gentlemen. If you turn your horses loose at once, they can feed about four hours before dark, and then we will tie them up to a good lot of browse which we can gather in the meantime. I think we shall find that we have two or three tomahawks in the company. Here is one that has served me in this spot, more than once."

As the company soon saw the propriety of adapting themselves to the circumstances of "Hotel Necessity," they set to work with a will, to make it as comfortable as possible. The Judge had selected an excellent spot for a camp, where fuel was plenty, which is the main thing to produce comfort. Here a bright fire was soon burning, upon the windward side of which a thick carpet of small bushes was spread, protected by a large log. This was for their bed, with pillows and bedding similar to the night before. Such provision of small limbs of ash and maple, as could be gathered easily, was made for the horses, which were to be caught and tied up before dark, and then the company began to think of their own increasing appetites. How these were to be appeased satisfactorily was not so clear, although it was understood that some of the saddle-bags contained food enough to keep them all from starving. This was mostly in possession of the two travelers who had accidentally fallen in with the court party. The same two whom I introduced in the first part of the chapter, as having arrived at Vincennes, and had an interview with the Governor. And this was their journey through the wilderness to that post, and their rough experience of what Indiana was in 1811.

With true backwoods liberality they now produced their store, and offered it freely to all their new acquaintances.

"And here are the plates," said one of the party, who had explored till he found out where some shingle-maker had been at work, and from the leavings had selected an armful of clean pieces of split stuff, and at the suggestion of the judge that they would be wanted he had brought them in.

The proprietor now produced that mysterious bag. From one end he took out a large venison ham, and from the other a pile of dodgers and a small tin pail. Such a shout of satisfaction as greeted the exhibition of these things, was enough to frighten any venturesome deer out of the neighborhood of the court that was about to try one of its companions.

By the aid of the pail and sundry tin cups that were found among the company—indeed a tin cup was a common appendage to a traveler's saddle in those days—coffee enough was made for a drink all round, and the venison being cut in slices, each man providing himself with a sharpened switch, roasted his own meat in the hot coals, and placing it upon a heated shingle, cut it in mouthfuls with his pocket-knife, and with that, and the corn bread and coffee, made a most substantial if not a very elegant meal. At least it satisfied some very strong appetites. At first some of the company thought that they had caught the judge at fault in not providing salt, but from the bottom of one of the capacious pockets of his overcoat—his "dreadnought," as he called it—he produced a small rag in which the old colored woman had tied up about half a gill of the article, and thrust it into his pocket just at the last moment, "case I spek it will be mighty relishlikesome, when youse eating dat wenison down by Muddy Creek." Indeed it was, and the thanks of the company were unanimously voted, to be returned to her in the borrowed tin pail, accompanied with a subscription of "a levy (12½ cents), each," as a reward for her thoughtfulness

The supper over, horses secured, and pipes smoked, story followed story, enough to fill a volume, and keep the company alive with mirthful enjoyment till nearly midnight.

I can only undertake to reproduce one of these stories, which the judge told as appropriate to the excitement of the morning, when the old sow was detected in bad company. It was about one of the same family.

"A neighbor of mine," said Judge P., "had a cornfield, alongside of which his hogs ranged in the road, and all but one old sow, something like the one that came into our bedroom last night, kept on their own side of the fence, which was intended to be built hog-tight and horse-high. That sow the owner had several times caught in the cornfield, and at other times had seen that she had been there and eaten her fill and retired. In vain he tried to drive her out by the way she entered, but she would endure any amount of dogging rather than divulge her secret. Probably he never tried the effect of fire, as our friend Sheets did. He did try to find the hole, but he could not; and as long as he watched the old sow she was as demure as—yes, as a judge. At length he climbed a tree, and then he headed her. He saw her come out along the fence, looking around to see the coast clear of pigs as well as men, for she determined to have no partners. Directly she disappeared, and shortly after she was heard munching corn on the other side of the fence. The owner came down, opened the bars and drove her out as usual, and shut her up. Then he went where she mysteriously passed the fence, and found a beech log used for a foundation, which was hollow and had an opening on the field side large enough for the sow to pass through. This log he simply rolled over, so that the hole in the side, as well as the one in the end of the log, opened into the road. Next morning he let out the sow, and went again to his hiding-place to watch the effect of the operation. As the old sow was hungry for corn, he had not long to wait. She moved along, cautious as usual, and entered the log. She came out with a grunt of satisfaction, as she supposed herself, where she had been frequently before, in the cornfield.

"'You had better believe,' said the man, 'that that old sow was astonished. She couldn't credit her own eyes. She shook herself and squealed, to make sure she was awake. Then she walked back to the other end of the log and looked all around to make sure it was the same one, and then she entered. She came out more puzzled than ever. I think she finally concluded that she had gone in wrong end foremost. This time she entered at the coming-out place, but the result was the same; she was still in the road. She took one more look at the thing, and started toward home, evidently not only disappointed, but chagrined, mad, alarmed, and perhaps superstitious; going off on a run, grunting her dissatisfaction; and afterward carefully avoided that part of the fence.' "She had certainly," said Judge P., "been outwitted, and was as thoroughly disgusted as our late lodger at the ferry."

With this and similar anecdotes this "night in the woods," was passed merrily. At length the fire was once more replenished, and every one lay down and slept soundly until daylight, by which time the creek had become fordable. Then the horses were saddled and the "court and bar" rode to "the court-house" for breakfast, which, although in greater variety of dishes, and in style a little more refined than the three last meals, was not enjoyed with more satisfaction.

The two travelers, whose history I shall give in the next chapter, felt upon parting with their quondam acquaintances, that they never would forget these two pleasant days of rough experience of frontier life.

## CHAPTER XIII.

**Dreams sometimes foreshadow events.**

It is now necessary that I should introduce the two travelers by name, since they will become important characters in this history. There was apparently some dozen years' difference in their ages, and the oldest would not have been taken for over forty-five, except upon infrequent occasions, when a shade of melancholy settled upon his otherwise handsome features, that gave him a look of many years, and all sad. Yet he was not so. He was only subject to this appearance occasionally, which an expert physiognomist would have said at once indicated most surely, the remembrance of some deeply-seated cause of melancholy. Some long-remembered, never-forgotten woe. We sometimes see such a face upon an invalid, who, always cheerful before others, does sometimes think of his or her incurable disease, which a few short months will terminate, and then there is a look of sadness—a look that says plainly, I am now thinking of myself. At all other times this man was one of the most cheerful, companionable and intelligent of travelers, always winning upon strangers, and valued by all acquaintances. Judge Parks often spoke of these two days they had traveled together, and of the pleasure which that acquaintance afforded him. The cause of his melancholy this man never alluded to; he even denied it whenever rallied upon the subject by his friends. They guessed that it had some relation to a woman, because he had never married, and the female portion of his acquaintances said "that it was contrary to nature that such a handsome, wealthy man, should live so long a bachelor, unless there was some great cause; such as disappointment in love, or losing his sweetheart somehow."

They were entirely right. He had lost his "sweetheart somehow." Perhaps you will find out how by-and-by, if you do not tire of following this narative.

The name of this traveler was Daniel Scott. He usually passed for a Virginian, though a native of Connecticut, because his father immigrated into Western Virginia, at an early day; where he purchased a farm, built mills, kept a store, and I am sorry to say, did just what many other Yankees have done, owned slaves.

Daniel spent much of his youth at school in his native State, where a common education was attainable—it was not in a slaveholding country where his father lived. After that he devoted himself to his own and his father's business for some years, and then on his sole account, until he had accumulated enough, he thought, to make a mark in the world, in such a country as he had read of in the Wabash Valley, and that, he said, was "why he had come to see for himself."

There was one other reason, but that he did not say, even to himself, nor to his most intimate friend, his traveling companion.

This companion was a cousin of his, in whom he had always taken a deep interest, and had induced to come West at a time when a journey from the Connecticut to the Ohio River, was no trifling undertaking. He had proffered him a partnership in business, somewhere in the West, and had actually made a commencement when the exciting stories about the Wabash country induced them to undertake the journey, a part of which I have illustrated. As they had left Virginia solely on account of the "peculiar institution" which has carried the State down a road of infamy, they were not particularly attracted to the views expressed by "Massa Johnson," nor to a country which he assured them was settled by people who almost unanimously agreed with him in sentiment. This was one of the things mentioned to the Governor which they had seen, that did not tend to give them quite as favorable an opinion of the new territory as he was anxious that they should receive.

Scott had seen enough of Slavery to make him hate it. His cousin, though not so well acquainted with its character, had no disposition to make his home in a State where it was sanctioned, nor in a community that looked upon it approvingly. Besides, he had lately married a Virginia wife, who had made it a *sine qua non* of the contract, that he should take her to a free State. It is thus that Virginia has lost her own children and repelled those who would have made most valuable citizens.

The name of this young man was as unromantic as that of his cousin. It was plain Abel Atwater. As I am not writing romance I am obliged to use plain names for a plain homely story about everyday people.

Atwater and Scott were born a few miles eastward of the banks of the Connecticut River, and from some circumstances that I shall speak of by-and-by, it will be seen, not far from Hartford. There may be those living in that vicinity who will recollect some of the incidents connected with their history, but I believe nearly all, if not quite all of the principal members of both families drifted away in the great flood of emigration that carried so many thousands from New-England to Ohio and other North-Western States as soon as the red men were pushed back out of the way.

Now let us return to Vincennes where we left the travelers preparing to join the army that was to march up the Wabash, for the purpose of pushing the red men a little further back.

As I have already told of the march, I propose now to take the reader into the travelers' camp the night before, or rather the night of the battle, where, having become accustomed to this mode of life, men slept soundly wrapt in their blankets, lying upon the ground, with nothing but the air, sky, clouds and rain above and around their couch. Here Abel Atwater slept and dreamed.

Dreams are frequently colored by preceding conversation or surrounding circumstances. In the present case the mind of Atwater had been unpleasantly affected by a letter that he had just received, which had been forwarded with dispatches to the Governor, by a special messenger who arrived while the camp was forming. In the hurry of the moment it was thrust into a pocket and not looked at until just as he was ready to wrap himself in his blanket for the night. He then read:

"My Dear Husband: I have this moment finished reading yours announcing your arrival at Vincennes and your intention of joining Governor Harrison's great Indian expedition, of which I have lately read so much in the New-England newspapers that come to you regularly, the editors of which look upon it, with his small force, as a 'fool-hardy piece of business.' That is their language. They say that 'Tecumseh has an overwhelming force of Indian warriors at The Prophet's Town'—the Lord knows where that is, I do not—and that 'the dictates of sound discretion would show the Governor the necessity of fortifying his post so that he can hold that and not attempt anything further.' They also say that 'he has a fort now some fifty or sixty miles up the river, weakly garrisoned, that ought to be at once given up and all the men and material withdrawn, before they fall a prey to the bloodthirsty savages, and that the Government at Washington is anxious that Gov. Harrison should try to conciliate the Indians instead of fighting them, but that he is an old Indian fighter and won't hear of any other course; although there is a well-grounded fear that his headstrong disposition will lead to his own destruction, and that of his little army.'

"You may, therefore, judge how I must feel, when I know that one who is so dear to me—I may honestly say two, since Daniel Scott has ever been like a father—are going with that army to destruction.

"If not too late I beg you for the love of your poor wife not to go. Remember that I feel very sensitive about Indians. By them I lost a grandfather and a very dear brother. Oh, merciful Heaven! forbid that by the same dreaded race I should lose my husband also. My husband whom I have loved almost to distraction ever since I first saw him, yet have only felt sure of for a few short months.

"You write me that one of the objects of your expedition is to examine the country, which the Governor tells you will develop to the minds of active business men, like you and Mr. Scott, sources of great wealth.

"Believe me you have now all the wealth necessary to render us comfortable and happy while we live, without touching the property inherited by you in Connecticut, and intended for your son.

"By-the-by, speaking of this, reminds me that a letter from your brother, received a day or two since, tells me that you have not yet made the proper disposition of that property in Fortune's favor. I hope when you return that you will not neglect this, lest your relatives may say that I prevented you. They do not know how unconditionally I placed my little fortune, with my hand, in yours.

"I am sure that I do not know what uncle Daniel (as I have learned and love to call him) wants to make more money for, since he declares that all he has is intended for his 'little pet,' who is your most affectionate, yet singularly timid, fearful Emily.

"*Marietta, Ohio*, Oct. 20, 1811.

"P. S.—Of course, you will say, I could not finish writing without a postscript. I thought that you might wish to read the letter to 'uncle Daniel.' Please remember me in love to him. Now, I have a word for you alone, which he must not hear or see. This is it: Nature prompts me to say, lest I may never see to tell you with kisses, that I shall ere long be as I expected when you left, a mother; and if you should never return I shall a few months hence, if I live, press your image to my fond bosom. In life or death do not forget this, and that a fond wife ever prays that He who overrules all things may guide you, and if I am forbidden ever to see you again, that God will protect your widow and orphan child. And now a fond farewell."

Few men of the same number of years had endured more heart-rending anguish than Abel Atwater. He had seen the corpse of one wife, the mother of the infant son, Fortune Atwater, mentioned in this letter, brought suddenly, and without warning into his home when he supposed that she was in the full enjoyment of health and life. But that trial did not affect him much more seriously than the sad forebodings of his present wife.

His first impulse was to seek the Governor and ask a discharge. A moment's reflection told him that he could not do that in the presence of a foe, without subjecting himself to the imputation of cowardice.

As no one anticipated that a battle was then impending, but on the contrary the idea seemed to prevail that the Indians would treat in the morning, there was really no occasion for the gloomy thoughts that the letter had momentarily awakened.

"I really wish, however," said Atwater to his friend, "that I had made a will before I left home. As my property is situated, it was an imperative duty that I should not have neglected. In view of a fact disclosed in a postscript to this letter, which I did not read to you, that duty is still more imperative, and I beg that you will remind me of it as soon as we get back to the regions of civilization."

"I will not neglect to do so, because I believe," said Scott, "that it is the duty of every man who owns any property to dispose of it while he lives. It often saves a great deal of trouble and waste in settling an estate, and I have known some cases of wicked wrong to arise out of the neglect of this simple duty. Our State Legislature has been very provident in this respect, as by its enactments it has done away with all the legal machinery of the old English law about the form of a will. Any sensible man can write his own, have it properly authenticated by a couple of witnesses, and thus legally pass property as fully as though it was done by a lawyer. I suppose that I have made half a dozen, altering them from time to time to suit new circumstances. Acting upon a hint that you have just given me about home, I think that I shall make another one when I get there. So may you. But you must go to sleep now, and I must go on duty. Here comes the acceptance of my offer to stand as a substitute for one of our old acquaintances of those two noted days and nights in our calendar. He is sick, too sick for duty, but would not ask exemption. I am well and strong and will take his place. He will be here in five minutes to take mine by the side of you. May you both sleep soundly. Let me see you cheerful in the morning. Good night."

He never saw him again, except in the wild scenes of the battle-field.

Atwater had been on duty the preceding night, and fatigue soon compelled him to seek the compensation for exhausted nature, which we all gain from quiet sleep. It was a sad place for quiet, even if his mind had been in good condition for repose. It certainly was not. That letter had disturbed him more than he could tell. It was kind and truly affectionate, but it awakened a long train of sad reflections connected with his previous life, and a deep anxiety for the dear wife he had left behind, whom it made him sad to think, he had caused to feel a painful anxiety, which would have been avoided if he had not joined this expedition.

In this state of mind he wrapt his blanket around him and slept he thought an almost endless sleep—his companion said not over fifteen minutes. Yet in that time he had called up the whole panorama of his life—his boyhood—courtship—marriage—birth of a son—loss of his wife—his widowed life—his journey west—his second marriage—birth of a daughter—and then a long blank space, in which there was a great confusion of Indians and angels, and then he looked down out of a very high window and saw his son exerting his utmost strength to throw his sister down a precipice. Just as the son was on the point of succeeding, he was struck down by a blow from an Indian, and his sister fell fainting into the arms of some one, whose face Atwater could not see, and this soon changed into a great serpent and was killed by the stranger just as it was slowly coiling itself around the mother and child and her protector and including Scott in its slimy folds. At this Atwater tried to go to the relief of those he loved, when he found that he had but one leg and could not move a step, and then he waked with the cold sweat standing in drops upon his face, as evidence of the agony that he had endured.

The mind of Atwater was not given to superstition, but this dream affected it intensely. In his waking dream, which followed the sleeping one, he saw the impending battle and felt the loss of his leg, and there were mixed up Indians and angels; and the bright windows out of which he looked upon his friends on earth, must be one in the place where angels dwell. And he could not divest his mind of the idea that he had seen one child for the last time, and the face of another he had looked upon in a dream, but never should look upon in reality.

After a long fit of musing, he got up, stirred the fire, and took from his saddle-bags, some paper, pen and ink and wrote, what Scott very truly said that every man in community should write, a will.

As this document will be, by and by offered, as the lawyers say, in evidence in this case, I propose to "put it in" at this point. Here it is.

"To all whom it may concern, be it known, that I, Abel Atwater, a native of the State of Connecticut, but at present a citizen of the State of Ohio, in the United States, do make and publish this last will and testament. Done in military camp, on or near the Tippecanoe river, in the Territory of Indiana, this sixth day of November, 1811, in presence of the subscribing witnesses, to whom I have made known the contents and disposition of my property, to wit: I declare that I have an infant son in the State of Connecticut, now in charge of his proper guardian, my brother Nathan Atwater. I give to this son, Fortune Atwater, all the property of every description that I own, or may own at the time he becomes twenty-one years of age, in the said State of Connecticut; and I charge my aforesaid brother Nathan with the whole care of said property, during the minority of Fortune; with full power to sell and convey real estate, as perfectly as I would do if living. In case of the death of said Fortune, I give one-half of said property to my said brother Nathan, and the other half to my dear sisters, or their children.

To my wife, Emily Atwater, I give unconditionally, all my property, real and personal, in the States of Ohio and Virginia, or any other place, beside Connecticut; excepting my watch, guns, pistols, twenty volumes of books to be by him selected, which, I give as tokens of affection, to my dear friend Daniel Scott. I also desire that he should have my wearing apparel, and sundry articles of bijoutry that he may wish to select.

Provided always, that if my said wife should have issue of a child, as the fruit of our marriage, then one-half of the property devised to the mother shall go to the child at its maturity; that is at eighteen years for a daughter, or twenty-one years for a son. And further provided, that if my son Fortune should die before his majority, and such a child as I have mentioned should then be alive, then one-half of the Connecticut property shall go to my brother and sisters, aforesaid, and the other to this child.

If at the time of the majority of my son Fortune, I should have no wife nor child in Ohio, or elsewhere, all my property shall go to him.

If my wife should marry again, during the minority of her child, all the property remaining shall be given to that child at the period of its majority.

I constitute the said Emily Atwater, my beloved wife, and my friend Daniel Scott, executors of this, my last will, with full power to do any and all acts that I could do while living.

Witness my hand and seal the day and year aforesaid. ABEL ATWATER.

Witnesses.
H. L. Farnham,
Jas. Merrick."

This document being completed and safely deposited in a breast pocket of a flannel undershirt, where many valuable papers were carried, the man lay down again, but he could not sleep. He got up, took out his pocket book and read the paper over and over, and then copied all the essential particulars of the will, and wrote a note to Scott, telling him what he had done, and why he had done it, and a few other particulars, and slipped that into Scott's saddle-bags, as his "Farewell—a long farewell—and as you hope to meet me in Heaven, be a guardian angel to my wife, and a father to my unborn child. If I should fall in battle, as some mysterious voice tells me I shall, you will find my will, properly executed and witnessed, together with some other important papers, in my inside pocket. I cannot say that I am ready to die—I am sure that I am not, but if it is God's will, I am resigned. Tell my wife that I do not regret that I joined this expedition. It was my duty. The Governor needed men, and why should I not go as well as another. Every one of these around me leaves dear friends—dear to them as mine to me. If I fall, it is in the service of my country, which I have always looked upon as the most honorable death that a man could die But why, you will say, these gloomy forebodings? I cannot tell; nor why that horrid dream, the agony of which was worse than death, and seemed as though it would never end. Yet our friend Farnham will tell you it was less than fifteen minutes duration.

One thing more. Do not think yourself, nor let any other person think, that I came here solely because you did, and merely to keep you company. As soon as I heard the truth about this controversy with the Indians, from Judge Parkes, during that memorable two days' ride, I made up my mind to offer my services as a volunteer upon this expedition. I did not then know that you would go; nor until night before last, what a powerful incentive you had to come into the Indian country. You had not before told me what you then related. I neither knew nor inquired why you had never married. How could I know that the heart of one always so cheerful, was but a cinder burned in some infernal fire of an Indian juggler, like this 'Prophet' that we have come to chastise. But enough of this. I only write because I cannot sleep. I will, however, try now, so as to give me strength for the great work that we may have to do before the sun goes down again. So. farewell once more and don't forget A. A."

After this, he did sleep, but those who slept with him said that he started up again and again, and once he said aloud, though speaking to himself: "Thank God he will be baffled in that. He never will get her property. That wickedness will be prevented by this paper."

After that he seemed to rest quietly until the shot that startled the whole camp into action, followed by suffering and death to many a brave man. But the incidents and results of that battle we will not further trace now, nor attempt to follow the fortunes of Abel, but rather leave him in his sleep on the battle field, and go back and take up the story which he hinted at, that Scott had told his mess around the camp fire, about the incidents of his early life. It is necessary for the reader to hear what Scott said, to enable him to understand much that I have already related. I shall try to give his story, as near as possible in the original form, as related to me by one of his listeners, who was, without exception, one of the most remarkable story-tellers I ever knew. Of this, however, my readers shall judge.

But really, I am almost as tired and sleepy now as the dreamer that has just stretched himself on the ground before the camp-fire, by the light of which he performed a long neglected duty. He did, reader, what you should do, before you follow me into the next chapter, he made, and you should MAKE A WILL.

## CHAPTER XIV.

He came to take his last look of earth.

**Two nights** before the battle of Tippecanoe the army encamped early, in a very pleasant location, where wood and water were both convenient—indeed that was the inducement for pitching the camp upon that spot, when several miles more might have been added to the day's march. Many persons who read of the slow marches of armies do not consider the necessity of making the camps conform to the topography of the country.

Owing to the earliness of camping, the evening was long and pleasant, and the mess that Scott was with insisted that as each of them had told his story of himself, it was now his turn, and there never would be another better opportunity. Atwater, who had given his the night before (and which I shall give the reader by-and-by), was most urgent, because he knew him best, and, to tell the truth, had a natural curiosity to learn why he had never married.

"I have never," said Scott, "told the reason to any living creature, and it seems strange that I am about to tell it to you here, around this camp fire, surrounded as we are by hostile Indians, who may at any moment send some of us to 'the far off hunting-ground,' by a night attack upon our camp, or by some act of treachery. Yet, curious as it may seem to you, here is the very spot where my story should be told; right in the heart of 'the Indian country,' for Indians were the cause of my being still unmarried.

"There is somewhere in this Pottowottomie region, a single rod square of land that I would give more to own than I would all the land that we have marched over between here and Vincennes. And there is one Pottowottomie Indian, a sort of chief among them, whom I would rather see than any other living man, and it is with some sort of vague hope to this end, that I am here this night; and I charge you, one and all, that if by any accident you should meet an Indian by the name of Meltonewah, you give me an opportunity to speak with him. The Commander-in-chief already knows my wishes, though not my reasons, and has promised their gratification. The reasons I am about to tell you."

How little the speaker knew that very Indian was then within sight of the glare of that camp fire, watching every movement of the army and counting its force and power, to ascertain the best time to strike a treacherous blow.

What would Scott have thought at that moment if some one had told him that he had already stood face to face with the very Indian he so much desired to see.

He little thought that the tall, dignified form, and highly painted face that Shobonier wore at Vincennes the day that Scott arrived there, was the face of the only Indian he ever wished to see. He had come as a messenger from the Prophet to Governor Harrison, to tell him "how very peaceably disposed his people were."

"Then," said the Governor, "why are they buying ammunition and guns by the thousand in Canada, and why are they storing up corn in such large quantities on the Wabash?

As the "peace commissioners" could not answer, they went back no wiser than they came, and Scott was no wiser for having seen the very Indian that he had been so many years anxious to meet. The reason why, we shall discover by listening to the continuation of Scott's story.

"I must," said he, "begin a long, long way back. Do you remember Abel coming to see me the last Winter I was at school at Hartford, at the house of the French artist? It was owing to a little youthful romance in my nature that I was there, and that he was alive, and that I am—an old bachelor. It is curious how all the events of our life hang one upon another by a single thread. That I am here to-night, is owing to the circumstance of what I just spoke ot as the romantic disposition of my nature, when I was at school at Hartford.

"I used to delight in rambling about the woods, and among the rocks and most inaccessible places, and often spent many hours reading at one particular place on the bank of Little River, where I was completely hidden by rocks and bushes from any one who might pass within a rod of where I sat. Just in front, and almost beneath my eyrie, there was a deep pool of water. It was a most solitary spot, where, in all the hours that I spent there, I never saw but one visitor. He had come, with mind diseased and sad at heart, where he thought no eye could see him, to take his last look at earth. He forgot, for the moment, that there is one eye that watches men that never closes.

"It was a beautiful, early Spring evening. It was just such a one as should win mortals to life, not send them out of it. The setting sun's rays came through the trees upon the opposite side of the river, dropping golden lines upon the water, and with little patches of light, along the hillside, finishing up a picture that I never tired of looking at, never ceased to admire.

"To this lonely, lovely spot, a fellow mortal had come, not to admire, but because he was suffering with a sad despondency, to such an extent that he determined to close his eyes upon it and all that is lovely in nature, forever.

"I had been for two hours reading Homer, and had stopped to moralize over what I had read, and sat wondering whether in all Greece, there was a river dell more lovely than this, when my dream of that scene was interrupted by the entrance upon this, of a most disconsolate, wo-begone looking man. My first impression was that some mildly insane person had probably escaped from his friends, and was now suffering for want of food and care, as he looked sadly in need of both. I determined at once to go to him and offer relief, but before I had time to do so, I heard him speak, talking to himself: 'Oh God! forgive me; but I cannot live to see my poor wife starving. I can not work with this emaciated trembling hand. This and this alone is left to me;' and at that he plunged into the water. Instantly the whole truth flashed upon my mind, and I threw off my outer garments, hat and boots, and emptied my pockets of watch and other things, and leaped over the precipice and down to the bank, by which time the drowning man had just come to the surface and disappeared again, but I marked the spot and sprang for it with the agility of a cat, yet without her fear of water. The next minute I was dragging the limp form of a man up the bank, which I began at once to exercise my skill upon, such as it was, to restore life. My efforts were not in vain. I found life still in the body, but it lacked warmth. Fortunately I had the means at hand that were needed. I ran as fast as I could scramble, wet and chilled as I was with the icy cold water, up the rocks to my little grotto, where I had stowed away an old suit of clothes which I used to put on to save a better one, when exploring the hills and rocks and streams. There, too, I kept a little flask of brandy and some crackers, as a provision against accident to myself, or ready for some mythical visitor. It was perhaps owing to my reading that I made this provision against the time that some Nausicaa might come here 'to wash the family linen,' and tumble in, and then I, her brave Ulysses, should spring out of my hiding-place and rescue the nymph from drowning, and restore her to life with my brandy and crackers, and then—

"Well, you may laugh, but what is the harm of a little innocent romance at eighteen—I am older now—and my romance saved the life of poor Antoine Lecandré. My brandy put a soul into a body that had nearly parted with its own. My dry crackers and dry clothes were just the thing for a wet body and famished stomach. From a light struck with my flint and steel I soon had a glowing fire, and by the time it was dusk, my drowned man was 'a man for a' that,' and ready to return with me to his miserable home."

"I only accompanied him to the door to make sure of the place, and then I went back to a store and filled a basket with all that I could think of in the way of food for immediate use, and at the same time, accidentally meeting with 'old Joe,' a pious old colored man, I told him in ten words what I wanted, and he followed me with his great arms full of wood, and Susy, his wife, one of the neatest and best of old colored women, and in less than half an hour we had Antoine's house lighted up and warmed, and a hot cup of tea, with toast and other good things smoking on the table. It is true that Joe had to trot round the corner to his house to borrow nearly all the table furniture, which Susy did her best to put in the most tempting order. Then she brought the table up to the bedside of Antoine's sick wife—dying, as he said, of starvation, and if perfect happiness was ever seen on earth, I am sure that I saw it during that meal. It was indeed difficult to tell which was happiest, Antoine and wife, or these two good old Christians with dark skins, but white souls."

"Or," said Atwater, interrupting him, "or one Daniel Scott, then and there present, aiding, advising, and assisting."

"I acknowledge," said Scott, "that I was not an uninterested looker-on. Indeed I was not altogether a looker-on, for I joined the supper-party, after going to my room and changing my wet clothes, as I had by that time acquired almost as good an appetite as my half-starved protegés.

"It was, with them, the old story. A poor artist, rambling over a strange country, meets a beautiful girl, falls in love, is opposed by the parents, the girl is determined, they run away, get married, have a long loving time and little to do, then a child and a sick mother and money gone, and finally, after selling out everything but the bare necessaries of life, and exhausting all the proceeds, and with them all hope, the attempt at suicide followed. The man did not lack industry nor talent, he lacked ability to adapt that industry and talent to any profitable use. Or rather, having got to the foot of the ladder, he lacked the power of making the first step up the rounds.

"By an understanding with him I made no allusion to the cause of my accompanying him home. I laughingly remarked that we did not come home very drunk, if we did tip our boat over, and if we lost our fish, we got a fine duck, and as it was my fault, the supper was only a fair payment of the penalty. This eased the mind of the wife, and rendered any explanation of my presence unnecessary.

"The next morning I made myself better acquainted with all the circumstances. I found the house a small one; two rooms below and two above; those above almost empty, and those below, the front room used for a studio and the other for general family use, both poverty-stricken.

"I was noted when young for quick thoughts and quick actions. In the present case it was a thought, a word and an act in quick succession.

"I found the rent low, but in arrears, of course. Very well, I said, I will arrange that, and to make it easier I will take the two upper rooms, and I will move in to-day; though I had little to move beside my trunk and bedding, unless I counted as furniture a few bushels of pieces of rocks that I had collected in my mineralogical rambles. I had been anxious for a long time to move, for I was in a noisy boarding-house where there was no place for quiet study. It was that which drove me to the woods. It was a part of the thread of my life. It saved Antoine Lecandré's life. It shaped my own up to this moment.

"Having determined to occupy the bare rooms above stairs, I called up Aunt Susy, whom I had retained as general counselor, as well as assistant in my new charitable enterprise, and it would have done your souls good to see with what hearty good will she entered into all my plans, and so did old Joe, God bless them! as I am sure he has, for they were most sincere, pious believers in his unbounded goodness, and that he had heard their earnest prayers and freed them from ending their days in slavery."

"La me, massa Scott, I knows now 'zactly how to do this 'ere, and 'twill jis do you both good, mighty heap. Dere now, only yes'day, was my ole man's niece, Sally Varnam, axing us what should she do wid her housen stuff, kase she is goin' as cook on de New-York packet dis Summer, and she didn't know nuffin what to do wid her tings. She has been done keepin' house by herself, all alone, eber since her husband die, kase she didn't know what else to do, and she hab got some real pooty things, an' I didn't wonner she hate to sell 'em, and she young woman, that according to natur will get married again, next year may be. Now you let her bring her things right in here, and you use 'em and keep 'em for Sally, and then she can go right away on the vessel. She'll be mighty content, soon's I tell her how we knows you, and that uncle Joe thinks such a heap of you; that's a fact."

"Lucky so far, wan't I? Sally Varnam, colored though she was, and called a 'nigger,' was as neat as her prototype, old Aunt Susy, and her furniture made my two cheerless rooms so full of comfort that I had but little occasion to seek the quiet of the woods when I wanted to read or write.

"The very sight of all this new life and hope around her, lifted the sick woman out of bed, and in less than a week she was entirely able to do all her housework.

"I made arrangements at once to furnish the necessary funds for provisions, and board with the family, thus improving my own comfort and supporting Antoine and his wife, leaving him free to pursue his profession, for which he needed only a few dollars to give him a start. I procured a couple of orders for portraits from some friends, and after he had got so that he could work and sing, and rock the cradle, while his cheerful, happy wife did her work in the other room, and I read and improved faster than ever in my studies up stairs, I put in execution a project that I had contemplated from the first. One day, when I knew that the weather was exactly right, and time of day suitable, I proposed to Antoine to take his portfolio and join me in a little walk. I kept his mind so busy with the beauties which surrounded us that he did not perceive how I was leading him to a spot which I knew he could not visit without a shudder. I led him to the place by a different route from the path formerly traversed, until I reached exactly the right location for effect, when stopping abruptly in the middle of an interesting story, I awakened his attention by a gesture of my hand, as I paused in my walk, and simply said: 'Look! there is the picture which will make your fortune.' My plan had succeeded. Like a flash of light, that sunny scene painted itself upon the soul of the artist.. He commenced sketching at once, and continued it as long as he could see. Then we went home and I went to bed and slept all the sounder for my pleasant walk in the woods. Antoine did not. He went to his studio. About four o'clock, seeing a light shining through a crack, I suspected that Antoine was still at work, and got up and crept down stairs and looked in. The outlines of the great painting—of the best landscape scene that I ever saw—were already upon the canvas. The artist was not a thing of earth; he was only the embodiment of a spirit—a spirit that conceives, creates, and employs human hands to do the mere mechanical work of painting.

"Antoine sat with his pencil in his hand, gazing at his work, wholly absorbed in its contemplation. I walked up and touched him gently. He started and said: 'Oh thank you. This is just what I was wishing for. It lacks nothing but yourself, standing up here in the little grotto as you did while I was sketching. Only five minutes—yes, stand just there, a very short time. I must finish it now, while the inspiration is alive.'

"In a short time he said: 'There, that will do,' and I turned my head and saw a likeness of myself, the best I think that ever was made of any one by a mere rough sketch. 'I can now finish the picture,' said he, 'at my leisure; the rest is merely pastime. The great labor is done. I can go out day by day and refresh my mind with the true colors. Depend upon it, thanks to you, I shall prove to the world now that I can paint a good landscape.'

"He did prove it. When he had given the finishing touch, I took several of my friends to look at the original, and they said, 'Oh, how beautiful! I wish this scene could be painted. I have been here before, yet I never saw the place in this light. Singular, isn't it? How did you find it out?' Then I took them to see the picture, and at once I knew that I was not deceived in my judgment. It was admired beyond our most sanguine expectations. There was, after this, no want of work nor friends for Antoine. He still lacked ready money, and felt a little uneasy to think that he was so much in my debt; but that, too, was near an end.

"There was to be an exhibition of pictures in New-York, and I insisted upon having this picture sent. It was necessary to mark the price at which it was for sale. After some hesitation about such a high figure, he consented to mark it $100, but observed that he believed it would spoil the sale, and that he would willingly take half the money. I do not know what spirit prompted me at that moment, when his back was turned, to change the figure 1 to 5, making it $500, and thus the artist's hope went off to its destiny.

"A few days afterward, a gentleman, accompanied by two married daughters, was examining the pictures in the exhibition, as he desired to make each of them a present. At length one of them exclaimed: 'Oh father, sister! come here, do quick. Here is that scene near our old home, which we have often admired so much. Was there anything ever so beautiful? This is my choice.' 'And mine too,' said the other.

"But as there is only one picture,' said the father, 'how can both of you have it, when one is to live in South Carolina and the other in Georgia? Let me see, what is the price? Five hundred dollars! Evidently the artist knows as well as we do, that he has made a most beautiful painting. And you both like it so well? Yes! Then suppose I secure this at once, and offer the artist three hundred dollars for its duplicate; to be so like, that one cannot be told from the other.

"'Oh thank you, thank you a thousand times. It does seem a great price, but then it is so exquisitely beautiful and so true to nature. I even think that I recognize that young student. Will you go at once, pa, and tell the doorkeeper that you will take this one at the price?'

"'Yes, and find out the artist, and see if he can make the copy.'

"A day or two later, I took from the post-office, a letter addressed, Antoine Lecandré, esq., artist, Hartford, Conn." It was post-marked 'New-York,' and was charged double postage, prepaid. I took it home and laid it before Antoine at the supper table. I guessed that it was from some one inquiring about the picture. I could not imagine that it was sold, because I remembered the trick of marking it up, and I had not been quite easy in my conscience since. Now I fairly feared detection, as detected I should be, if this were an offer for negotiation. Then I wondered why the letter should be double. I tried hard to persuade myself that the picture was sold and that the letter contained the pay.

"I do not know what Antoine thought, but I noticed how strangely he looked at the letter, turning it over and over and holding it up to the light, during which I discovered that there was a slip of paper inside, with red printed letters upon it, and then I began to feel easy and begged him to open the mysterious package which was formed of a small sheet of paper, neatly folded and written upon in a fine female hand. The inclosed, however, was from a business man, being a bank check, payable to the order of Antoine Lecandré, for $500. If it had been iron, and red-hot, it would not have dropped more quickly from Antoine's hands. The man was so overcome that he could not read the letter. Not a word had been spoken for some minutes. His wife picked up the paper and passed it over to me, and I read aloud:

"'DEAR SIR: My father directs me to inclose to you his check for $500, the price marked upon your picture, now in the exhibition, and also to offer you the sum of $300 for a perfect copy. Please inform him, as per inclosed address, when you could complete the same. It is needless for us, who are well acquainted with the original scene, to say how much we appreciate the picture. Our ready purchase declares our feelings.

"'Am I dreaming! Will one of you pinch me? Here, stick a pin into my arm until it bleeds. Do convince me that I am awake, and not the victim of some wicked delusion. Oh, Scott, you are cruel to trifle with me. This is some vile cheat—some trick that you are playing off upon me. Speak; is it not so?

"My dear fellow," I replied, "it is but three blocks to Mr. Bull's office. Step round there, I saw it open when I came along, and ask him what commission he will charge to cash this check.

"With some difficulty I induced him to do so. The supper was postponed. Mr. Bull knew us both, and had seen and admired the picture. He would have given I think $50 or $75 for it. Possibly he might have named a hundred, after a good day in shaving notes, on distant bank paper. The check was shown and questions asked. He looked at it sharply, over and under and through the glasses of his silver spectacles. Then he looked at each of us in the same way, to see if he could discover anything to indicate that either of us forged or stole this check. I believe that the paper and the persons all stood his rigid scrutiny to his satisfaction, for he said: 'Why if you should want it in gold, I should charge you half per cent, but if you took it in our bank paper, I would cash it at par, and if you would take Boston bank paper I would make you half per cent allowance--that is to-morrow—it is too late this evening. Come in again in the morning, *gentlemen*.' I could not help smiling at the emphasis put upon the last word. We promised to call next day, if we concluded to negotiate the paper, and retired with more bows than we ever received before, put them altogether, from the aristocracy of Hartford. Depend upon it, I did not fail to tell Mr. Bull, what the check was for, and that another for $300 would be forthcoming in the course of a month. How the poor artist rose in public estimation during the next few hours. He was not overelated, except in his thanks to me, at his success. He could eat his supper now in sober quiet comfort, and from it he got up and stretched his canvas to begin the copy, just as though such orders were an every day occurrence. His wife was not quite so philosophical. She was elated almost beyond her power to control her emotions, and she lavished her words of gratitude upon me so fast that it was almost painful, and finally, just to stop her, I caught her in my arms and hugged and kissed her, and ran away out of the house. She blushed a little the next morning, and her husband laughed at her, and went on quietly with his painting, and I continued my studies.

"In due time the copy was completed, and Antoine insisted that I should delay a few days for him to get ready to take it to New-York, as I was on my way home—my school time being out. I parted with his wife with sincere regret. I esteemed her as one of the most exemplary, real genuine, good wives I ever met with. I felt no little pride in the part I took in effecting a perfect reconciliation with her family. Perhaps you think that this $800 had something to do with it. I assure you that it preceded that event, but I know that it did not set it back any.

"I parted with old Joe and Susy, with more regret than any other friends in Hartford, because I saw the regret with which they parted with me. Sally Varnum, had consoled herself with another husband, and wanted to sell her furniture, 'cheap for cash.' and Mrs. Lecandré was glad to have it. Antoine and I settled all of our accounts in a true business manner, he insisted on my charging every cent of money I had paid out, and he upon his part, charging the stipulated price for board. I thought at the time there was a little something lacking on his part—some kind of acknowledgment, but I let it pass, wondering how the receipt of a little money could cool the warm heart of a poor man.

"Well, we reached New-York, and Antoine would not part with me until the picture was delivered. 'He wanted me,' he said, 'to see if he had made a perfect copy, without having the other to look at. We found the original hanging in an admirable light, in a beautiful parlor, inclosed in a most expensive gilt frame, and by the side of it an empty one, awaiting its fellow. It was soon put in place, and by previous arrangement the family was to be called in to take the first view of the copy. Antoine stepped out to say that the picture was ready. Quick as a cat I was up the step-ladder, and presto, change! The copy was in the place of the original. It had been previously agreed that Mrs. Legare, who first discovered the beauty of the picture, was to have the original. So they all came in and the pictures underwent a critical examination, and after a deal of canvassing it was decided that the two were so wonderfully alike that the copy only needed a very few slight touches to make it like the original, which Mrs. Legare was pretty decided, was, on the whole, the best picture, and she should abide by her choice, and Antoine confessed that she was correct in her judgment. In the mean time I had drawn the father aside and let him into the secret, and he enjoyed the joke exceedingly, Several friends had by this time dropped in, and opinions became more evenly balanced, though not very decided in favor of the supposed original, except by Mrs. Legare and the artist.

"By-and-by the father said, 'Well then, my dear," speaking to Mrs. Legare, 'you are satisfied to keep this as yours, are you?'

"'Yes, indeed, I am true to my first love."

"'And you, Anna, are you satisfied with this; or do you see any alterations to make?'

"'Not any, Sir, I am quite satisfied.'

"'And well you may be,' said he, taking hold of the frame and turning it around so that the back of the canvas could be seen, 'since you see that this is the original and that the copy. Now, let us go to supper.'

"Such pictures of astonishment, and such hearty, good-natured applause at the 'clever trick,' as it was termed, have seldom been seen and heard in a private house.

"The artist and his friend were welcome guests at the supper-table, with a large company, and after supper, the gentleman called for his desk and commenced drawing his check. Antoine went over and whispered a few words to him, and when the writing was done, the servant who came to take away the desk brought the check to me, and I told him he was mistaken; it belonged to the other man. He looked to his master, and then laid the check on the table before me, when I saw that it was filled up in my name, and I immediately exclaimed: 'What does this mean?'

"This attracted the attention of every one, especially as Antoine answered immediately: 'It means just what it says, that that money is yours, and you must take it without a word of objection. It has all been agreed upon between me and my wife. It is but simple justice. Indeed it is less; for if it had not been for you those pictures would never have been painted, and my poor wife and child would have been in the poor-house or pauper's graves."

"Pausing a moment, he begged permission to tell his story, which he did, briefly up to the evening of his great despair, and then he depicted what I had done for him in such glowing colors that there was scarcely a dry eye in the room. 'Now,' appealing to those present, 'I beg you to aid me to compel him to accept that check, so I may not feel that I am an ungrateful wretch. My wife will be really unhappy if I bring this money home. She had much rather have me come as an honest man. This is an honest debt. I can work all the better after it is paid. I really think that I could paint a picture that I could tell myself from the one I copied.'

"This brought another round of applause, during which Mrs. M., the other sister, stepped out of the room and returned, saying as she laid a heavy roll of something upon the table, close by where I sat, 'I am determined, since my sister has chosen the copy and left me the original, not to have a cheaper picture than she has, nor have this at less than the original price, so here is two hundred dollars, in gold, to make up the deficiency, and I will leave it to all the company to say if it has not been honestly earned. If there is one dissenting voice, I will take it up again. Not one; the money is yours.'

"And I will," I said, "accept this only upon condition that it is a loan to be repaid with interest."

"This proposition met with universal approval, and I then hoped that the excitement of the evening was over. Not quite. For after the money matter was settled and I was compelled to become suddenly rich, for this money added to an old debt of my father's, given me for collecting, made up a thousand dollars, and that to one of my age was a great sum, I saw Antoine take from his pocket a small package and exhibit something to the gentleman of the house, who looked at it and then at me, and said 'admirable.' I thought at once of a portrait, but then, if it was one, how had he made it, for I never had sat to him, except for the large picture, where no likeness of face was expected. Still I was right, for Antoine rose and said:

"'Ladies and gentlemen: I have been treated by this company in a manner that will endear your memory to me forever. You have not only saved the life of a poor artist, a stranger in your beautiful country, but you have lifted him out of the sink of poverty, and given his work such a position before the world that I do not fear want again. I shall now work with courage. Before my friend Scott rescued me from suicide, I had succumbed to despair. I owe everything to him. It was he who bought the colors and brushes and food, while I worked and made that picture. It was his judgment that fixed its value—so high that it alarmed me, yet the proprietor says that he has been repeatedly solicited to sell it for more money than I received. I have tried to show my gratitude to this friend by giving him only a portion of the money that I have earned through his means. I do not wish him to keep that to remember the poor artist, but I do wish him to keep this until he finds one every way worthy to be its custodian; one who he believes will treasure it more than he would himself.' It is my first attempt, ladies, to paint a portrait on ivory, and I will exhibit it to you to judge if it is a fair likeness, before I present it to Mr. Scott.'

"It was then passed around and pronounced as perfect as it was possible to make such an article. I told the company that I had never sat for the picture, and then several said that if he could paint like that on ivory, he never should touch any common work, and agreed at once to employ him and engage any number of patrons, if he would come to New-York; and I had the satisfaction before I parted with him of knowing that the arrangements were all completed to that purpose.

"The portrait presented to me in this way, was about the size of a quarter dollar, though more oval than circular, the ivory being set in a very neat frame of gold, edges and back. I believe at that moment I valued it higher than I did the check that I had reluctantly pocketed. I am certain that I would give ten times the amount of that check now, to any one who will return that portrait to me, with a true history of events connected with it after it left my hands. I should like to know whether it was buried or burnt, and whether it lies in any part of this wild Indian country. It is a small matter to hunt for upon these great prairies, yet I tell you honestly, gentlemen, that is what brought me here. But you will excuse me from telling anything more about that little trinket of ivory and gold."

"No, no, no! You have just got into the interesting part of the story; for you were never to part with it except to one under certain circumstances. Come, now, don't shut down on us that way. Let us have it all, and depend upon us as honest men for sympathy, and if possible, for assistance."

This was the general sentiment of the company, and finally, Scott consented to proceed, although, as he said, it would call up reminiscences that he had been more than twenty years trying to forget.

"My father lived in Western Virginia, where he owned mills, and a country store, but withal found it difficult to get money enough to keep his business going. He had just written me that an opportunity had offered to make a very handsome profit, in an Indian trading expedition which one of his neighbors wanted to undertake and have him furnish money to buy blankets and certain kinds of cloths, and some other things, in New-York, but he thought that he should have to give it up. However, he wished me to call upon Messrs. Minturn & Champlin, Hanover Square, who dealt largely in Indian goods, and ascertain upon what terms they would furnish a stock—whether they would give credit and await a return of furs. So the next day, after the events of the evening I have mentioned, I called upon these great merchants, told them who I was, and as they knew my father, they thought of course that I had just come on to buy goods, and I did not tell them to the contrary. I had no occasion to tell them that I was a romantic school-boy, because I had other notions in my head now.

"Having ascertained the prices, and that they did sell on credit, I at once made a bold proposition. I had no idea of the amount that my father would venture, but I struck upon six thousand dollars, with one thousand dollars in hand, and the balance upon the usual credit, they to deliver the goods in Baltimore, as soon as the vessel could make the trip. They closed at once with my offer, and I handed over the check indorsing it with a bold business hand, and before night the goods were going on board, and next day I went with them and had a quick voyage, and when we struck the wharf, I noticed black Bob, my father's wagoner, just starting off. I sung out 'Bob,' most lustily and brought him to, until I could get ashore. I found that he was one of a caravan that had come over the mountains with deer-skins and other stuff, and were now going to look for return loads. Without an hour's delay, I had my goods out and wagons loading, and next morning they were rolling toward sundown. It was just twenty days from the time I called upon Messrs. Minturn & Champlin in the character of a young Western merchant, I was one in reality; and long before the term of my credit was up, I had sent forward peltry enough to pay the debt, and give me a fund of ten thousand dollars for future operations.

"Of course, my father and the family were thunderstruck when the wagons rolled into the yard, and the goods were rolled out, and "young hopeful" with them. They were still more astonished before the end of the year at the net results, for our Indian expedition was a most lucky one. I intend, gentlemen, to make this equally lucky, in another point of view.

"That bold stroke was the foundation of all my business success, and if I was in command here, I would make one equally bold. Whenever I found this fellow you call The Prophet, and his town, I would pitch in and annihilate the whole. It is the only way to treat these redskins. I know them and have no love for them."

"But what has all this to do with the portrait?"

"Ah, true enough, gentlemen. Yet you insisted upon a story, and you have got it. Now if you insist upon hearing more, why all I have to say is, that you must wait half an hour while I rest and smoke a pipe of tobacco." [To be Continued.]

## CHAPTER XV.

### You have spoiled a pretty dream.

"Now," said Scott, "since you insist upon it that I shall tell you some of the secrets of my early life; why I am still a bachelor, and being one, with no one to provide for, why I am here, like many others in this army, looking for 'a good location for a mill or a meeting-house.' You forget, that if I have no children of my own to settle in a new country, some of my friends have, or will have. Here, for instance, is my friend and relative, named in memory of the first man that was ever killed by his brother. If he does not suffer a similar fate, he will probably have a large family who may want homes in this most beautiful valley. He certainly has one child and a wife who is one of the most lovely women, except one, that I ever saw. It is of that one that you compel me to speak.

"When I started on my trading expedition, I entrusted the precious little miniature to the care of my sister. It was precious to me, not only as a souvenir of Lecandré and his wife, and their sweet little girl, whom I have purposely and for a very good reason, almost omitted to mention, but it was a souvenir of the great fact, that there was, at least one noble, honest, generous heart in the world, which was not governed solely by selfishness. For the generosity of that man had put me at once into a position that would have required years of toil to attain.

"I often thought of the words of the artist, when he made the presentation, and wondered if I ever should find one whom I could esteem worthy to be the custodian of this picture. Since I had become acquainted with Mrs. Lecandré, I had set my mark pretty high, as to what a wife should be, for she was in reality, 'a helpmate to man.'

"She was not only beautiful and intelligent, but industriously disposed with her hands, and had practical good sense, and economy, to aid her husband. I have no doubt that it was her cheerful, happy disposition, that gave him much of the strong inspiration which enabled him to make such living pictures.

"It was the associations connected with this picture—not the picture itself—that gave it such value. I told my sister, of course playfully, that she was not to let any woman look at it, until she found one that she would approve of as its keeper forever. 'For,' said I, 'any girl who sees it, will inevitably fall in love with it, and out of pure benevolence, I shall be obliged to make her your sister. So, look sharp for yourself.'

"About three months after this, I received a letter from Letitia, upon every line of which her happy, smiling, beautiful face fairly gleamed. I think that I can repeat its contents, long as it was."

"My Dear, much loved Brother—I have found one to whom I should be willing to consign the treasure committed to my care—not only to consign the portrait, but its original. 'She is all my fancy ever painted' as the personification of loveliness. You have often, in your flattering fondness, told me that I was beautiful. This girl is far more so. And then she has such a sweet name. It is Melli, or written in full, Melligo, which means the honey-dew. Her whole nature is as sweet as that curious substance. She is a counterpart of your sister in many respects, and that is enough, I know, to make you love her, for I am quite sure of your love for me. Do you think me vain? Ah well, but you know you do love me, and I know that you will love Melli Winfield. She is exactly my hight, but a better form. Oh it is perfectly symmetrical. I never saw anything like it. Feet and hands small, but none too much so, and full of strength. Her arms are round and firm, and oh, such beautiful skin. There never was anything like it I am sure. I feel as though I wanted to kiss those arms every time I see them, but I generally expend all my kisses nearer the seat of her splendid intellect, which beams like sunshine from every feature of her face. Her cheeks are not red, like mine, they are rosy. Her eyes blue, and so bright that they fairly sparkle when she is animated. At rest, you would take her for a Quakeress, she is so calm and gentle. Do not laugh at me, dear brother; I am in love with this angelic girl, and I must describe her. Her hair is of the same brown as mine, but longer and more profuse. Her nose, lips, chin, ears, and general shape and form of head and face, all much like your sisters', which you have often tried to make me believe almost perfection.

"You have repeatedly said that whenever you found a girl that would compare favorably with your sister Letitia, you intended to make love to her. I assure you that she is found. Come home as soon as you can and see if I have not told you the truth.

"She has seen your portrait, but as yet she does not know whose it is. I showed it to her as the likeness of my lover. I am sure that I told her the truth in that, for I have no other. She looked at it a long time silently, until I spoke some rallying word, when she looked up and I saw a tear glistening in her beautiful eye. I begged for an explanation. She hesitated—I pressed her—literally.

"'Oh,' says she, 'you have just spoiled the prettiest dream that ever soothed the mind of a romantic young girl. Shall I own the truth to you, foolish as it is. I have seen this picture before.'

"'Oh no,' I replied, 'that is quite impossible. It has only been in my lover's possession a few months, and he never showed it to any living soul until it came into my hands, and its production and existence were kept a most profound secret by the artist, until it was presented to the original by the friend who painted it at Hartford, Connecticut.'

"'I know it, yet I have seen the picture before; and more than that, I have seen the original, and from that moment my heart has not been my own. I said then that if ever I married, it would be to that man. Now my dream is over. My dream-lover is yours in reality, and I would sooner thrust my hand into that fire than allow him to take it in place of yours.'

"'Do tell me,' I said, 'are you not dreaming still. I cannot understand how it is possible that you could have seen either this or the original. You told me that you never were east of New-York.'

"'I know it; and was there only a few weeks. You know I was born not far from here—that I went to Philadelphia to school, and after that I went to visit my uncle, Col. Henry Winfield, in New-York, whose two daughters had lately married two very wealthy Georgia and South Carolina planters, and wanted to see their backwoods cousin from Western Virginia, before she returned to the wilderness They had purchased, at a wonderfully high price, two remarkable twin pictures of a landscape, from the artist who painted this miniature, and it was presented to the gentleman while I was there, and I was so effected by his presence that I think that I must have appeared to him, if he noticed me at all, as uncouth as the greenest backwoods girl in this settlement. That is where I saw your lover. I did not even learn his name, nor residence, except Western Virginia. and I was romantic enough to hope that I might meet him here some day.'

"'So you shall and love him too; and if he loves you, you shall have him, and my blessing with him.'

"'Oh, never, never, Letitia. Do not talk so. I am sure that you do not love him as you should, or you would not speak so lightly.'

"'Yes I do, and you shall see it soon, for he is coming here. I shall look for him in a month.'

"'Then pray do not send for me. Indeed I could not see him after telling you all this.'

"So ended our conversation about 'my lover,' and his portrait, and next day she went home. Perhaps now my brother would like to know who this paragon is, that has so crazed your sister; and whether she is rich and high-born, as well as pretty. Very well; I will tell you all I know, or else I fear you will die of curiosity. As to riches I cannot answer. You know 'Strawn's Mills,' up the valley; those are on her land. And father says they are valuable, and afford her a revenue sufficient to support her, unless she should 'be silly enough to fall in love with some scapegrace, like his son Daniel, and marry him to spend it all upon some Indian trading expedition.'

"It appears that Melli is only an adopted daughter of Strawn's, though generally supposed to be his child, since he has always treated her like his own.

"As to the high-born part of the story, I am doubtful. Her foster-father is certainly very respectable; and it seems that you know something of her uncle's family in New-York. By-the-by, do you remember any thing of her? And why in the world did you not tell me about that strange scene? That is where you got your money from—is it? I am glad to find that you did not get it pirating, or some other less romantic way.

"I think, then, that you may be satisfied with that branch and this of her connections. She is an orphan or worse than one, for her father has only been vaguely heard from since she was a little girl, though she has full faith that she shall find him yet. He is supposed to be among the Indians somewhere near Lake Michigan. Perhaps you know where that is. It appears to me a wonderfully long way off. Melli says that a trader told her father Strawn, when he was once down the river somewhere, that he had seen Winfield, and knew him, though he would not acknowledge the name. She told me what his Indian name was, but I cannot remember it, though I am sure it sounded dreadfully like Tomahawk. I suppose I thought more of that, because I have heard that Melli's mother was killed by an Indian with a *tomahawk*, and she is marked with the figure of one between her shoulders, half as big as my hand. Fortunate, is it not, that it is out of sight? You remember the mark of an open, bloody hand, on the face of John Berryman. If Melli's mark had been on her beautiful face—oh dear, it makes me shudder to think of it, she is so beautiful.

"There, now, thank me for a real good long, loving letter, and hurry home and see my prodigy. Do, now, that is a dear good brother, and if she does not love you I will. So good-by.

P. S. Have you saved those nice skins for my muff? Save enough for two, will you? That is a dear good brother, and you shall be more than ever loved by your sister,
LETITIA."

"The letter was almost a month old before it reached our camp on the Maumee, and we had already begun to pack for a return. I do not know that it is foolish for me to say that this letter hurried proceedings, for I very well remembered this drop of honey-dew, and how I wished at the time that it had been mine to taste, but saw it then upon a leaf very far out of my reach.

"Was it possible that some gentle, heavenly breeze, would yet waft that leaf down from its high bough, within my reach?

"I had read romance, but it seemed to me that I had never met with any thing more romantic than this whole story of my sister's letter, so far as it connected events with my life.

"I had no means of forwarding a letter to Letitia that would reach her before I should return myself. The consequence was, that quite unannounced and somewhat unexpected, I arrived at my father's house upon a cool April night about eight o'clock in the evening. There was a bright glowing fire on the hearth, which, with the candles on the supper table, apparently all ready for its guests, sent a broad light out through the uncurtained window, where I saw my sister Letitia standing, looking over to the store as though waiting for father. She recognized me as I rode up, and I saw her turn toward some one in the room and heard her say:

"'Oh, here comes my lover. You have arrived just in time. Now you will see him,'

"Then a voice answered:

"'Oh no; let me escape, I beg of you. I am so afraid that he will recognize me.'

"'You are too late,' Letitia replied, 'for here he comes,’ and sprang into my arms as I opened the door.

“Melli was confounded. Her quick intuition told her that that was not the way that Letitia would meet her lover, and her heart leaped, as she said, up to her throat, so that she was for a moment almost suffocated, and could not have replied if she had been addressed.

“She knew by the garb, who the lover really was, for I came in the full costume of hunter and trader, with deer-skin hunting shirt, leggings and moccasins, with rifle, powder-horn and shot-pouch, and, over all, an Indian blanket. It was a rig more likely to frighten than captivate a girl.

“Letitia pushed me back a step into the hall to divest me of my accouterments, and this gave Melli time to recover her self-possession, so that when I did enter she met my advance without waiting for an introduction, just as she would an old acquaintance, and said with a most bewitching grace, as she held out her hand:

“Mr. Scott, I am truly glad, on your sister’s account, to see you safely returned. I hope that you have not forgotten where we met before.

“It was my turn now to have the heart in the throat, particularly as I knew that my mischief-loving sister was enjoying my confusion.

“The entrance of my father, however, and immediately afterward my mother, and brothers and sisters, all ‘so glad to see Daniel,’ gave me time to ‘come round’ into my usual state of self-possession.

“Notwithstanding my hunter’s garb, all the family, Melli included, declared that I was greatly improved by my trip, in manly appearance. I certainly was a better looking man then than now.

“The first evening at home was so devoted to relations of my life in the woods, that I had no opportunity for a private word with Letitia nor Melli, and she was to return home the next day. Finding in the morning that she was to go on horseback, only attended by a servant, I determined that she should have other company. I found her a most accomplished equestrian and fond of the healthy exercise, so that it was no hard matter to induce her to ride out of ear-shot of the negro boy, and then I told her that I thought it idle for us to be wasting time—that it was foolish in me to pretend that she did not know that I was deeply enamoured of her, and I hoped upon further acquaintance that she would be willing to accept me as her betrothed, and then we should respect each other, and the world would respect us accordingly. That if she required time for reflection, I would give her all that she desired. She replied frankly, that under ordinary circumstances, she should wish some time to consider such a proposition, but why should she falsely pretend that she was not ready to speak now, since she knew that her own heart already had fully answered that question. All that she should ask time for was that I should not press her for a union, at least for a year. ‘Let us,’ said she, ‘both have that length of experience, and greater maturity of age. And as we are to part here, for the present, I will assure you that I deem this engagement, upon my part as binding as though it had been preceded by two years of courtship, instead of two hours on horseback.’

“‘And I too, on mine,’ I replied, riding up alongside, ‘and here is my pledge of eternal fidelity,’ as I reached my arm around her and drew her up to me, and exchanged with her the sweetest kiss that ever rested between mortal lips.

“And that pledge I have faithfully kept and shall keep till I am sure that my affianced bride is no longer mortal.

“‘Well, brother,’ said Letitia, as I entered the house upon my return, ‘what do you think now of my drop of distilled honey-dew? Isn’t she sweet.’

“‘Yes, the sweetest I ever tasted.’

“‘What! You don’t pretend, I hope, that you have been already sipping sweets from those lips?’

“‘No sister, I do not pretend; I acknowledge the truth.’

“‘Why brother, on horseback.’

“‘Yes. Why not? She is the best rider, for a woman I ever saw.’

“‘Truly; I know that; but what has that to do with your kissing her?’

“‘Why every thing. If she had not been a good horseman, how could I have accomplished such a daring feat, with two such spirited horses?’

“‘It strikes me that as it was, there must have been a willingness on her part.’

“‘True again. And why not?’

“‘First tell me why?’

“‘Most willingly. With your consent, which I already have, and that of my father and mother, which I shall ask for within an hour, I shall allow you to tell the widow Pennypacker (and that is equivalent to publishing to all the world), that Daniel Scott and Melli Winfield are duly and honorably affianced, and if we live another year through, you shall acknowledge her as your sister.’

“‘Why Daniel; you astonish me almost as much as you astonished us all when you brought home those goods. I do wonder if Melli was part of that purchase? Did you fall in love with her at first sight?’

“‘No; I had no such hopes then. I saw and noticed her wonderful beauty of face, but I find that is the very smallest of her beauties. I believe her all that you represented in your letter. But, good or bad, I have plighted my troth to her, without reservation, and she has accepted it, just as any honest, sensible girl should, whenever an honest man makes such a proposition. There was no whimpering and lying, and asking for time to consider, and saying that she did not expect such a thing, when she did expect it, and at which she was fairly rejoiced. In short, there was no nonsense about her. She is the most sensible girl I ever met with. She is more like Lecandre’s wife than any woman I ever saw.’

“‘And that, judging from your letters, is saying a good deal, but not a word more than Melli richly deserves. I approve your promptness of action and sincerity. It will be a great relief to her, for I know she loves you adoringly. As she could not kiss you all that you deserve, I will now act as her representative.’

“During all the following summer, I do not suppose that Virginia ever held two happier lovers than Melli and myself. She was a most accomplished rider, and her beautiful grey without a fault. What delightful rides, walks, and boat excursions we had, almost always accompanied by Letitia, from whom we had no secrets, and sometimes with a large party, by all of whom we were looked upon as properly belonging to each other. She had promised her foster-father and mother that she would not marry until she was eighteen, and we all thought well of her for wishing to keep that promise.

“Then, if she heard nothing of her father in the meantime, she would be free to act upon her own will, and to enter upon her property. There were two little trifles that worried me. Despite her sound education she was superstitious; and some accursed old witch or ‘fortune-teller,’ had told her that she would see her father before she was married, and that a very tall, dark-haired and dark-skinned man was, or would be, desperately in love with her. Now, you see, gentlemen, that I did not fill that description. There was a mean dog in the neighborhood, partially answering the description, who almost teased her into ill temper by his persistent attempts to make love to her. I had at length to interfere and threatened him severely, if he ever spoke to her again. After that he took to lies and mischief, to injure her, as naturally as a duck takes to water. That is always the way with such low minds.

“In the forepart of Winter she wrote me hurriedly to come up and see her that night, if possible, without saying wherefore. I was very busy in fitting out another trading expedition, but I went. I found that an uncle, a brother of her mother’s, had arrived there, and was pressing her to go home with him and spend some weeks, perhaps all Winter, at a frontier settlement in Ohio, and she wanted to know if I was willing.

“I really was not, but did not like to say so, for fear it would appear selfish, and as though I wanted to exercise control over her will. So I partially consented, but she said that she should not go, if old Silva, the witch that I have alluded to, prognosticated evil. That gave me a clue, and on my way home I turned aside to consult the sorceress, or rather to bribe her to my interest. She took my money and pumped all the information that she could out of me, so that she could use it to impress the unsuspecting girl with her supernatural intelligence, and then urge her to do exactly contrary to my wishes. This was because she was in the interest of the miserable scamp that I have just spoken of as Melli's persecutor.

"I was to return on Saturday, as I must start on Monday, and wanted to say good-by, whether she went or not, to Ohio. I found her all ready for the journey, and as my father's was not much out of their course, we all agreed to go down there Sunday, and Monday morning I should move down the river and she up, and thus bid all our friends good-by together.

"Just before parting, she begged the privilege of taking the miniature with her, saying playfully, 'when I return it, you may consider the engagement broken, and till then, never.'

"And thus we parted. 'Tis the last time I saw my affianced, or my portrait. I do not know that she is dead; though my heart tells me that she is not living.

"Need I tell you any more of the heart secrets of my life.

"'Yes! Yes!' half a dozen voices replied; 'do not stop here. In mercy tell us what became of the girl. Did she prove false? Did she return the portrait?'

"Oh no. If she had I should then have been free. She made the journey in buoyancy of health and spirits, and arrived as happy as an angel, as she wrote in her journal, day by day, finishing and inclosing it to me before she went to sleep, with such joyous expressions of love as makes a man rich who receives them.

"That was the last ever seen or heard of her by any of her former friends, for that night four Indians entered her bed-room and lifted the bed so gently that she did not awake, and carried her off beyond all chance of pursuit or rescue.

"I am mistaken in saying the last heard of her, because her handkerchief was found in one of the Indian camps, upon which she had written with a coal, a few particulars of her abduction. It was always believed her father had sent for her, but why no one could tell, nor what ever became of her. It is yet a profound mystery, though there was a wild rumor that one old Brady, a real Indian-hunter, ascertained some years after that she was carried off at the instigation of her father, but that he did not know then that it was his daughter, and that a young Pottowottomie chief, named Meltonewah, fell in love with her and wanted to marry her, and her father objected, and a general row followed; and to keep his child from the Indians, the old brute killed her, and the Indian killed him. This story was afterward contradicted by some trader, who said that her father caused her to be burnt at the stake as a sacrifice to some infernal spirit, and that he saw the spot, and saw the old man, who was a great conjurer, and ruled the Indians just as he pleased. He also said that he knew this Meltonewah and that he was one of the handsomest Indians he ever saw, and a lot of such stuff. But I do not believe a word of it, except that there may be such an Indian. I am led to think so from a very slight circumstance.

"When we were at Vincennes there were some Pottowottomies there, and I asked the interpreter to put the question to them, if they ever knew one by the name of Meltonewah, and as soon as that name was uttered, one of them started as though he had been shot. But they all denied any knowledge of such a man, yet I believe they lied. I wanted to inquire if human sacrifices were ever offered, and particularly if they ever knew of a white girl being burnt, or stolen and brought there for that purpose, but the interpreter did not think it best to ask such foolish questions. As I talked with him, I looked right into the eye of that fellow who gave the start, and if he did not understand every word I said, then I do not understand my mother tongue. Since that I have half believed the story of the sacrifice, and I have longed to see the spot. Gentlemen, you may think me still romantic, but I would give half I am worth to know that that girl died pressing my portrait to her heart, as I shall die hugging her, in imagination, to mine.

"If we ever get speech of these red-skin gentlemen I shall pursue my investigations, and perhaps I may yet live to learn the truth, and that would be a satisfaction, although it might be most horrid.

"Now, comrades, I have finished my story. If it has been all of self and tedious, give me credit for its truthfulness, and let us camp down and go to dreamland all together."

The length of this tale had occupied the time till after midnight, giving less than four hours to sleep, and with Atwater, that was abridged by the intensity of his own thoughts, for his history was somewhat interwoven with that of Scott, and the very part which he said that he purposely omitted, called up such painful emotions that he could not sleep. The next night Atwater was in the saddle, and the night after we have already seen, was not devoted to quiet rest, but when the battle commenced he was ready and went into it, his companions afterward told Scott, with a courage that amounted almost to recklessness. It is certain that several Indians fell by his hand, but it was very uncertain what became of the brave fellow that dealt them such blows. He was seen about daylight upon his horse, which was afterward found in the brook at the foot of the high bank that bounded the north side of the camp, dead, but stripped of saddle and bridle, and no trace of the rider to be discovered. Scott, assisted by several friends, devoted all the time possible to spare for such a purpose, searching among the dead and through the grass, weeds, and bushes, hoping to find where Atwater had crawled away and hid after being wounded. If the horse had not been found, all would have believed that, after being wounded, it had carried the rider far away into the prairie, and then some hope would have been entertained of his recovery. As it was, there was no hope. Although contrary to the policy of the Indians to take prisoners, there was no way of accounting for the loss of this man, but to suepose that he had been carried off, and it was feared, to be tortured, in revenge for the Indians that he had killed.

Scott was obliged by the exigencies of the army, which could not delay, to give up his friend as "missing"—worse than if killed, for then he would have been certain of his fate. As it was, how should he ever be able to meet his wife, with the dreadful tidings that he must carry with the few remaining tokens of her dear husband?

In the mess to which Scott and Atwater belonged, the loss of the latter was a constant theme of speculation during the return march. For two or three days some of the company appeared to imagine that the lost man might suddenly start up from some hiding-place along the route, or else make his way at night into camp. Finally, all such vain hopes failed.

Scott thought by day and dreamed by night of his friend, and at last began to connect his disappearance in some way with the mysterious disappearance of his long-mourned but never-forgotten "drop of honey-dew." He even imagined that there was some unaccountable connection between her abduction and Atwater's, and that the Indian who had started at the sound of Meltonewah, was the agent in both cases; and he almost fancied that Atwater had allowed himself to be taken prisoner by this man, on purpose to seek information of that long lost girl. Then he began to plan a great trading excursion next Summer into the Pottowottomie country in search of one living friend and the grave of a dead one; for he had long since ceased to think of Melli, except as she was, among the purest and brightest of Heaven's host of angels.

What became of Atwater, at the battle of Tippecanoe, the reader is already aware, from the story of old Shobonier.

What finally became of him, he will probably learn, if he has patience to continue this narrative. But first, he must be content to spend with us, other evenings around the camp-fire, during the return of the army to Vincennes, and listen to other stories from Scott, who has been importuned by his comrades to tell them something about the man whose singular loss had excited so much thought and conversation. To this he at length consented, and that story I shall reproduce in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XVI.

My own, my native land, how lovely are thy scenes!

"As the army drew near the close of its campaign, Scott was often reminded by the members of his mess, that he had promised to give them a brief review of Atwater's history. In answer to this he at length said:

"I do not know why I should obtrude any of the events of his life upon you, but since you appear to have taken a deep interest in his melancholy fate, and ask me to do so, I will fill up one of our last evenings in camp with a few of the leading particulars. This I will try to do briefly, but if I become prolix, check me, or lie down and go to sleep. As I cannot sleep with any degree of satisfaction, since the battle, I may become garrulous, but it is some relief to an aching heart to talk.

"My mother was an Atwater, sister of the father of the one whose fate you appear to mourn as sincerely as I do myself. Abel was born upon the old family homestead, on the east side of Connecticut River, not immediately on the bank of that beautiful stream. It was by the side of a smaller one, and in a most lovely spot, near a little lake or pond, along which I have spent many a pleasant hour with hook and line, for the fish were very abundant there when I was a boy, and my uncle's house always invitingly open to me whenever I was in my native State. And there I spent some years at school, as the chance of even a very common education in Virginia, at that period, was a poor one. My father moved away from Connecticut when I was quite small, but I always remembered it with affection, and the house I was born in, which is the same that I spoke of as the birth-place of Abel. Not because it was elegant or excellent, but simply because it was mine and my mother's home, and it is innate for me to love 'my own, my native land.'

"That inelegant, but lovely mansion, upon the shore of that clear lake, was one of those real old-fashioned, homely New-England farm-houses. Will you allow me, just by way of contrast to a Western log-cabin, to make you a little picture of it? It seems to draw my thoughts away from the saddening reminiscence of my late loss; the loss of one whom I loved as a brother, perhaps because we were both born under the same old roof; a roof that sheltered an 'American hearth-stone,' in its true sense; around which, during my uncle's life, I believe there would have been a glad welcome for any homeless mortal.

"I have never found any place that gave me such an idea of home comforts, as the kitchen of one of these grand farm-houses in Winter. I think that I have helped pile nearly half a cord of wood, in the great stone fire-place of the old Atwater house, at one time. It was amply large enough for such a quantity, and warmed with its ruddy glow a room about sixteen feet wide and twenty-four feet long. And it was a common thing to see a table set the whole length, well filled with food, and nearly every seat occupied with Atwaters or their connections.

"Besides the ample kitchen there were two great square rooms, and one or two family bedrooms, a large 'buttery' and smaller pantry, beside halls and stairway, in the main body of the house; and a 'lean-to' or addition, at the back for Summer kitchen, wash-room, cheese-room, store-room, etc. Often one of these houses, so extensive on the ground, was only one story high, but the rafters were very long, which gave ample room for good bed-rooms up stairs. Sometimes the house had a gambrel roof, and that made square chambers. The one I was born in was two stories high in front and only one in the rear, the vast roof sloping down so low that I could reach the eaves. I remember one peculiarity of these buildings, was the immense oak timbers. There was a beam, called a summer-tree, at least sixteen inches square, across each of the large rooms of my uncle's house, forming part of the ceiling, which was not a lath and plaster one, but made of the timbers that support the chamber floor, all smoothly planed, with a ceiling board fitted in between, and held, as well as made tight at the edges, with strips of beaded oak molding. Long use and smoke had given these oak timbers and boards a color about the hue of our coffee. My aunt used sometimes to hint at whitewash, but my uncle refused to listen to it. 'He would as soon,' he said, 'whitewash the mahogany sideboard.' This piece of furniture stood in 'the spare room,' and on its top a large waiter, filled with pitchers and glasses, and in its recesses bottles of Jamaica rum, Cognac and cider brandy; and one of the indispensable acts of hospitality was an invitation to 'take a glass of spirits.'

"The table fare was substantial, wholesome, abundant. The principal bread was rye and Indian, peculiar to New-England. Six days in the week, the dinner, which was always ready at noon, was composed of a dish known by the simple name of 'boiled victuals,' usually composed of salt pork, and beef, potatoes, turnips, and frequently beets, carrots, parsneps and cabbage, all cooked in one great dinner pot, and brought to the table upon a large pewter platter. The drink was cider or water.

"The supper was made of 'cold boiled victuals,' with bread and cider, or bread and milk, occasionally varied with mush and milk, under the name of 'hasty-pudding.' Sometimes my aunt indulged in a cup of tea—always when she had 'company,' that is, guests in the house.

"There was generally tea or coffee on the breakfast table, with a dish of hash made of the cold beef and potatoes, with slices of the cold pork, and sometimes fried pork, or ham and eggs, in season, and generally rye-flour bread and butter. At the other meals, butter was not much eaten. A little pie and cheese often followed the meat dinner, and some cakes and cheese after meat at supper.

"Every Saturday, a large pot of pork and beans, and a generous Indian pudding were baked for Sunday, and sometimes they were on the supper table Saturday night. On the Sabbath the regular noon dinner was always omitted: that meal and supper being combined.

"At 'killing time,' the regular course varied, and the dinner was of fresh meat, and sausages and souse came occasionally upon the supper or breakfast table, and every now and then during Summer, codfish and potatoes stood in the place of boiled "potluck." But a farmer who did not lay up pork and beef enough to 'go round,' and cider enough to have a mug always upon the table, was considered 'a poor coot of a farmer,' when I was a boy, in the neighborhood where our poor, unfortunate lost friend was born.

"Shall I tell you in a few words, something of the surroundings of that old house, to which I have wandered back this evening, as we sometimes do in a dream?

"It stood so that the four great windows of the kitchen—the every-day room of the family—looked out, as they always should from such a room, south-easterly, and upon a pleasant scene of green grass and trees. On the left, and breaking off the north-east wind from that side, was the wood-shed, and extending from that toward the barn was the tool-house, wagon-house and cow-house, flanked by the pig-house and poultry-house. Looking off to the right from these windows was the kitchen garden, an acre of ground, more profitable than any other acre on the farm. Its borders were studded with early apple-trees, pear-trees, peach-trees, quince-trees and currants and gooseberries. The variety and quantity of vegetables afforded by that garden was wonderful.

"The other side of the house was the front, and had a broad expanse of velvety turf between it and the highway, and upon each side of the two paths, one from the front door and one from the kitchen, there were wide, rich borders, devoted to rose bushes and flowers, which were, when I was last there, under the especial care and keeping of five healthy, vigorous, working girls, who had a passion for cultivating flowers, and general out-door ornamentation. These five sisters of Abel were as handsome for girls as he was for a man. He had one brother, a few years older than himself.

"This is the family that will be thrown into deep mourning whenever they learn what we already know.

"From the front door we looked down over the road and across several cultivated fields and meadows, upon that most lovely lake, and beyond that into the woods of a high rocky hillside. All around were orchards, fields, farm-houses and great barns; and in sight from the upper windows, a neighborhood mill on the outlet of the lake. In the other direction and upon a good deal higher ground, stood the old meeting-house, the bell of which has rung regularly at noon and nine at night every week day for more than fifty years; and probably in all that time it had never failed to ring the 'first and second bell' Sunday morning, and 'toll for the minister;' while he walked from the parsonage to the church.

"In all things the regularity of life in that region is about as even and fixed, as hours of ringing that great bell. Such was the early life of Abel Atwater, in that blessed old homestead.

"In the village on the hill, almost in the shadow of that gray, wooden, moss-grown meeting-house there was an institution called 'the Academy;' where boys and girls were supposed to gain some advantages in education over the regular course of the old red school-house at 'the four corners.'

"It was to this Academy, and to board at my uncle's, that Antoine Lecandré sent his only child, the sweet Leveretta. You will not wonder why I did not speak much the other night of the loveliness of this girl, when you have listened a little longer to my story. When she was twelve years old, she was the most womanly child I ever saw. Indeed she was no longer one. She bore the strongest evidence of having enjoyed that greatest of all blessings for a good child, a good mother. Mrs. Lecandré was all that a man could desire for a wife and mother of his children. Leveretta, although an only child, was not a spoiled one. After the change in the fortunes of the family, the mother had more time to devote to her daughter, and had improved it properly. She had not only taught much of the learning of books, but what books to read, and all the domestic duties of housekeeping, so that Leveretta was more capable at that tender age of taking the charge of a family, than some girls are at thirty.

"There was, her mother thought, one thing necessary to finish her education, not attainable in New-York, and that was the pure air and good society to be found upon her native Connecticut hills. Hence her introduction into 'our Academy,' where she spent four Summers, returning each Autumn, just before the close of navigation, to New-York for the Winter. This opened another very necessary branch of a girl's education, for she kept up a continued correspondence; with her father and mother in Summer, and with the Atwaters in Winter.

"It was very evident to the sisters from the first, that their brother Abel was deeply enamored of 'the New-York lady,' as they often playfully called her, yet each one had the good sense from its incipiency, ever to encourage this affectionate regard, because it was easy enough to discover it was mutual; and long before she became one, the girls used to call her 'dear sister.'

"I did not see Leveretta after the second season she was at my uncle's, as I was then in business in Western Virginia, but I am told that she was the very personification of maidenly beauty and loveliness at sixteen to eighteen, as she had then attained a full womanly development, in a perfect form, with a healthy constitution. She had her mother's blue eyes, light skin, brown hair, and handsome mouth and teeth. Her strong, sound intellect, quick perceptive faculties, vigor and enterprise, she inherited from her father; and also a good deal of his artistic talent. She could sketch a landscape or a face, with a few strokes of her pencil, that indicated the original at a glance. Her ability to arrange the plants in the flower garden, so as to give each one its proper complement of color, was wonderful. She was a valuable botanical teacher to the Atwater girls, and in everything in dress or other matters, that related to the appropriateness of colors, Leveretta was consulted.

"I might have said, truly too, that she was equally consulted upon every point relating to the æsthetics of life. Whatever the subject which she had ever studied in school, or read about out of school, she could give instruction upon some point.

"I have been told by my cousins that old Minister Williams used to say that there was not a person, male or female, in the parish, who gave him so much satisfaction in talking about ancient history, sacred and profane, as Leveretta Lecandré, when she was only fifteen or sixteen years old. He certainly evinced the truth of the assertion by his manner, for he used to come regularly every week, one day at my uncle's, and one day at the Academy, and every week he expected the girls to spend an hour or two at the parsonage, to chat with him, and take tea with 'Grandma Williams,' as they affectionately called her.

"There is nothing in mathematics that can compute the advantages to girls, arising from such an intercourse with good people.

"The last year of Leveretta's attendance at the Academy, Abel was not much at home. He had attained his majority, and come into possession of considerable property, left him by his grandmother, part of which was a place in one of the pleasant little towns that dot the banks of the beautiful Connecticut, and thither he had gone to establish a mercantile business, and to fit up and beautify the old mansion and its surroundings, ready for the little songster that he intended to induce to make her nest in that cage.

"In the mean time, as soon as he received the money part of his inheritance, he sent me two thousand dollars, which I invested for him in lands in Ohio, and these would sell for ten, and perhaps fifteen thousand dollars to-day. 'This,' he said, 'was his reserve; if he failed in his main undertaking, in which he was in partnership with his brother Nathan, he should have his Ohio lands to fall back upon.'

"I mention this, merely as an instance of his native shrewdness, and caution, to illustrate the impossibility of his having rushed into danger rashly, in the late fight. He was brave, but not rash, though he sometimes appeared so, because he was so quick to act in emergencies. My theory in relation to his loss differs from some of those who have commented upon it, and supposed that he madly charged down the bank to cross the brook in pursuit of the Indians, where his horse was found. I think he was hit by the same shot that gave the horse a death-wound, while on the plain, where last seen by Farnham, and that the horse ran and plunged down into the water, where the Indians seized and carried off the rider, before he could extricate himself. Why they did so I suppose will forever remain a mystery. But I find I am getting off the story that I undertook to tell, on purpose to keep my mind away from that battle ground. It will revert to it in spite of all my efforts. Now I will try once more to forget it and its sadness.

"A few years ago, Lecandré and his wife came to make an Autumn visit in Connecticut; she among her relatives, and he in the hills and forests, while they were colored in all the gorgeous beauty of late October frosts. It was their intention to take Leveretta home with them, not to return again to school, and this was deeply regretted by the Atwater family, and a pretty large circle of acquaintances, and, I must say, by the young lady herself, who had no desire to become a permanent resident of New-York. She loved the purer air and greater freedom of Connecticut hills and woods, and pleasant intercourse among the social people, who seemed, in the circle in which she moved, like one great family, with old Father Williams at its head.

"About a week before Leveretta's birthday, one of the last of the lovely 'teens,' her father and mother, and 'next best friend,' met at the old Atwater mansion for a farewell visit; it being arranged that as soon as the birthday was over, she would start for home with her parents. Fate, or Cupid, I do not know which, willed it otherwise; for before the week ended, the lovers had concluded that it would be "awful" to be separated during all the long Winter months, by a hundred and fifty miles of frozen water, and not be able to get an interchange of letters oftener than once a week. Such a privation was too much for human (lovers') endurance.

"One evening after supper, when all the family and their guests, and a few neighbors were gathered around the great fire-place that I have already described, Abel performed an act that will satisfy you that he was a man of nerve, for he walked in from 'the spare room,' with Leveretta on his arm, and presenting himself before her father and mother, he said: 'We have come, sir, to respectfully prefer to you and your wife, an important, but duly considered request. Our future happiness is involved in the answer.'

"There was an instantaneous hushing of all the busy tongues which were so lively when the couple entered. It was the very thing that would naturally embarrass a timid young man, to know that all present were listening to his every word. But he proceeded steadily.

"It is no secret to you, nor indeed to any one present, that it has long been my intention to make your daughter my wife. I believe her choice has met your hearty approbation, as I know mine did that of my departed mother, and does now of my father, brother, sisters, and other relatives, whom I particularly desire now to heed my present request, which I hope they will approve quite as heartily. I will state briefly, that it has long been the desire of my affianced bride to celebrate her nuptials upon her birthday, under this roof. That anniversary occurs within the next twenty-four hours, and unless the desire of our hearts is consummated then, it must be deferred for a year, which I fear will be tediously long, and we therefore, mutually, and most respectfully ask your consent, and the approval of every one present, that our union may take place to-morrow.

"The request had taken Lecandré by surprise, who hardly knew what he ought to say in reply. For a minute the room was as silent as though its inmates all slept, Antoine looked at his daughter—a look which said, 'How can I part with her?' Then his eye wandered over to my uncle, to see if it could read in his face what his thoughts were. In the midst of this painful silence and suspense, there was a very soft voice, quite low, yet distinctly heard. Mrs. Lecandré leaned over toward her husband, and whispered, 'Say yes!' 'Say yes.' The words were echoed and re-echoed. The spell that had locked every tongue was broken, and it was impossible for pent-up enthusiasm to restrain itself longer, and the father hearing every one, asking him to 'say yes,' he said it; and then there was such a clapping of hands, and such exclamations of joy, that every nook and corner of that old house was filled. I have no doubt, if it was analyzed, you would find that great old oak summer-tree, saturated with the stored-up joy that overflowed from a score of happy hearts that evening.

"I have just recollected, and, in view of late events, it strikes me as something very singular, that Leveretta's birthday was the seventh of November. It really is strange that three great events of my friend's life have fallen on that day. The first one was the marriage with that sweet girl, upon which occasion that great farm-house was filled to its utmost capacity, and notwithstanding the very short notice, there was a great wedding feast, for every one of the neighbors insisted upon the privilege of making a contribution.

"I wish I could repeat to you, as I have had it repeated to me, the prayer that old Father Williams made that night, to invoke blessings upon the new husband and wife. His words were like those of inspiration. After praying that their life might be long and ever as happy as its commencement, he said: "But if it should please our Heavenly Father to cut short this beautiful flower in its early blossoming, we shall still bless his name, knowing as we shall that it will be because He desires to transplant it to the gardens of the abode of angels."

"My pretty cousins all declare that if I had seen Leveretta, as she stood upon the floor that night with their handsome brother, I should not wonder at this singular expression of Parson Williams, in 'supposing that the Good Father, may desire to add such a lovely being to his family of angels.'

"The next day after this auspicious beginning of a hoped and prayed for long life of happiness, the new couple and a dozen or two of their relatives went over to Abel's house, to install the young bride in her new home; and also to fit up a vessel that belonged to the two brothers, Nathan and Abel, and called after the latter, for a pleasure trip to New-York.

"I should like to describe to you the beauties of a sail down the Connecticut River, in a clear, calm Autumn day but I really lack the ability. It requires just such an artist as Antoine, to paint that picture. He was in a sort of artist's ecstacy all day, with his sketch book in hand, fixing the various scenes upon paper, so that he could call them up for future use. I have a small painting which he sent me as a Christmas remembrance, from a view taken a little below Middletown, that is a real gem. I had often noticed it as I passed that way, but never realized its great beauty until I recognized it on canvas.

"Atwater has—no, had—a picture that Antoine sketched as he passed the landing at Middle Haddam, that is most unique, representing the wharf, storehouse, and several other buildings, with boats and all the usual surroundings of the place, true to nature, with some figures thrown in, perhaps, imaginary, which give the whole a most comic effect. The idea represented is, that a couple of drunken fellows engaged in racing their old nags, approached the wharf, and the one ahead goes over his horse's ears into the water, as the animal comes to a sudden halt. The idlers standing around are in all conceivable attitudes of coarse, boisterous mirthfulness. The opposing rider has stopped a little back and taken his bottle, and is apparently drinking to the health of him who is just then getting his full share of water, if he does not of the rum.

"The vessel that this wedding party made their bridal tour in, was not intended for carrying passengers, beyond two or three in the small cabin, yet there were now about thirty on board, men and women, and all were comfortably accommodated. The hold was partly filled with new pine lumber, and this was partitioned off with piles of bags of oats, and in one part the ladies slept upon mattrasses and straw beds, and in the other the gentlemen had similar accommodations for sleeping. The table was s most of the time on deck, and at other times in the little cabin, where about a third of the company could squeeze around it at one time; and never were meals enjoyed with greater zest.

"The run down was quick as it could well be, with a breeze only just strong enough to give the vessel good headway. As there was reason to fear cold and stormy weather, the visit was a short one, and then Leveretta said good-by to her father and mother and 'went away to her own house.'

"During the year that followed this event, Leveretta enjoyed as great happiness as ever falls to the lot of mortals, who live to love one another, and that love was consummated in the birth of a son, which gave that highest satisfaction to a mother; full perfection of form and face. Circumstances had prevented Antoine and wife from visiting Leveretta during the Summer, and they were therefore very anxious to have her visit them as soon as she was able to do so, with that new bond of love between her and her husband. This was the more imperative, as her father had determined, as soon as he could, by working night and day, finish some orders, to go to France; whence he would not return for a year or more. Of course, the dear girl must see her parents before they went away, and they must see the grandchild. This was perfectly natural, and therefore they urged her to come to New-York.

"This, at length, Abel consented to, upon condition that one of his sisters accompanied her, and then he would follow by the next trip of the vessel, to complete the visit, and be with them on their return.

"They remarked all the way down the river, how much the weather and the scenery, were like what they had experienced one year before, but things on board were widely different. The hold was now full of freight and the deck also. Althea said, before she had been an hour on the vessel, that it had too much load on deck; that the schooner was top-heavy, and was seriously disposed to go on shore and return; but Shock Adams, the captain, a rough old sailor, laughed at her, and Leveretta did not appear at all inclined to give up the voyage, Her maternal pride was to be gratified by the exhibition of her beautiful babe to her mother. So Althea tried hard to choke down her apprehensions of danger.

"The crew consisted of Adams, the captain, Jack Halstead, the mate, and Jim Baker, a colored boy, the one 'hand before the mast.' There was also a boy, who filled the office of cook, good enough, probably, for sailors, but not exactly the sort for lady passengers, who occupied the same little cubby, called an after-cabin, that Leveretta and her husband occupied upon the former passage. The captain and his mate had berths in the main cabin, which also served, as before, for dining room.

"As the vessel sailed smoothly down the river, Althea was laughed at still more for her fears about the loading. But laughing did not quiet her apprehensions, particularly at Saybrook, where they had to stop some hours to wait for a favorable time of wind and tide to cross the bar, during which the captain and Jack Halstead went ashore, where there was a company of river men, drinking as usual.

"The boy went with them to lay in a stock of oysters, clams, and fresh fish for the voyage, and I suppose he thought that he might do whatever he saw his superiors doing. At any rate, shortly after he returned on board, he slunk away to his bunk in the forecastle, and Jim seeing that he was so drunk that he could not get up to prepare supper, undertook to provide for the ladies and himself, the two men being still ashore.

"A little after dark they came off and said the tide suited, and got under way. As soon as this was done, Old Adams came down and turned in, about as drunk as the boy, leaving the navigation to Jim Baker, who was sober, and Jack Halstead, who was not. Under these distressing circumstances, and the ill loading, Althea almost expected to see the vessel capsize while in the rough water on the bar, but the breeze was light, and she passed it safely, and turned on her course up the Sound, hugging the north shore, as the wind was from that quarter, and began to blow pretty fresh.

"Althea, wrapped in one of Abel's 'dreadnaught' pea-jackets, that she found in the cabin, with a stout woolen cap on her head, resolutely kept the deck. She knew the condition of the captain, and she now grew seriously alarmed to find that Jack Halstead was getting almost as badly off as the others. Finally, after looking at her in her sailor rig until he became satisfied in his drunken fancy that she was her brother, he insisted upon resigning the helm, and leaving 'Cap'n Abel and Jim to navigate the schooner, while he went below to rouse out Old Adams, 'case they might have a squall off Cornfield Point.'

"'What shall we do, Jim?' said Althea, when thus left to themselves and the charge of the vessel, which was surging ahead under angry-looking black clouds, and 'Cornfield Point, not a mile ahead, where a heavy blast might sweep down from the Bay and small stream and open meadows beyond.

"It certainly was a serious question, 'What shall we do?'

"'I think, Missee, dat we will go safe by dat ole pint, and den dis chile can run de ole Abel up to Westport and stick her nose in de soft mud. Den I can get de sails in, and we shall be safe any how.'

"Althea ran down to Leveretta with this comforting assurance, and begged her to lie down with her babe and rest easy. Then she hurried up on deck, just in time to see Jim bracing himself at the helm, to meet the blast that he expected as soon as he opened the point. They went by safely, and Jim was just saying, 'Tank God, Missee, we are past that spot,' when a squall struck her sails, which were quite too large for such a wind and such a load, and almost as quick as thought, the vessel was on its beam ends; Jim was overboard, and Althea caught in the rigging, by which she was able to crawl upon the upper side of the quarter.

"Jim, the active fellow, as he went over, carried the end of the main halliards in his hand, and hearing the scream of Leveretta, he swam directly to her window, and stove it in, and called her to wrap up the babe and give it to him and then tie the rope he gave her fast around her body, and jump out. In this she obeyed him to the letter. Jim now swam round the quarter and climbed up and gave the child to Althea, and then hauled in the precious burden attached to the line.

"The fright, agitation, cold water, and condition of Leveretta's health, and the length of time she was necessarily in the water, before Jim could get her upon the dry part of the wreck, were alone nearly sufficient to destroy life. She had enough left, however, to make her anxious for the life of her child, and seemed rejoiced to find that Althea had escaped, in a great measure, from being wet, and was therefore able to afford such an excellent protection for the babe, under its father's warm old pea-jacket.

"Jim wanted to pull off his own coat, wet as it was, to wrap around 'the blessed missus,' but she would not allow him to do so. To guard against the danger of their being blown or washed off the wreck, he secured them both by lashings to the quarter-rail, and then went off on an exploring expedition about the wreck.

"The boy he knew was lost, for he met him floating off on some of the lumber, while he was in the water. He had probably sprung out of the hatchway and overboard at the first alarm, and seizing the first thing within reach. had drifted away into the darkness alone, slowly to perish.

"Jim wondered that the two men had made no effectual effort to get out of the cabin, as he had heard them sing out some terrible oaths, when the vessel went over. He thought, unless they were much drunker than when they went below, that the cold water would have sobered them, and could not understand why they had not got out either by the companion-way or cabin windows, from which he rescued the mother and child. True, they might not have been able to open the door into the after-cabin, but then the companion-way was not entirely submerged for some minutes. After Jim's return with the babe, he had not heard a sound from the men below. He wondered why. His explorations soon told him. They had rushed simultaneously for the deck, and when their heads were a little above its level, the deck load of lumber had shifted and surged astern, crushing and killing them both instantly, and holding them fast in its death grip. It was such a terrible sight that he was anxious his two passengers should not see or know of it, and wished that he could either push the bodies back down the cabin stairs, or else get them afloat, so they would drift away, and set himself to work for this purpose.

"He found the raft of boards was held in place by a hawser, but it was too heavy for his knife. He knew there was an ax at the foot of the foremast, but that was submerged. Nothing daunted, he dove for it, and cut the lashings and brought it up. One heavy blow severed the hawser, or weakened it so that it broke with the heavy strain, and the pile of boards leaped up to the surface, forming a tolerably level floor twelve or fifteen feet square. 'If it don't get away,' said Jim to himself, 'till I gets de ladies on him, we is safe for de trip to Long Island.'

"He said he never was so happy in his life, as when he found that the raft was firmly held to its place, by the boom and boom tackle, and he at once went about getting the two women into this more comfortable position. He found Althea and the babe sound and able to endure the voyage that he had no doubt they were making across the Sound. His greatest fear was that the wind was so far west that it might drive them outside of Montauk Point.

He got Althea upon the raft, still taking the precaution to lash her fast, and then crawled again up the quarter for Mrs. Atwater.

"'Poor soul; God bless you,' he said as he took hold of her, 'dis chile am gwine to hab you off of dis cold spot, any how.'

"She did not answer. Jim knew why. She shivered sadly as he held her in his arms, and her teeth chattered, and her breath came in sighs and groans, as though the effort to breathe was painful. Speak, she could not. He carried her down by Althea on the raft, and then said: 'She must hab dis coat, dat am sartin. She can't say no, dat a fact.'

"Noble fellow! Your black skin covered as great a heart as ever rested in any bosom.

"Jim wished now that he had stripped the coats from the two dead men, before they floated away. It was too late. He could not get into the cabin, for the door was under the raft. But there was one thing that he could do, and he hoped with success.

"The captain's berth was directly under the quarter where the two sufferers had been sitting. To that he crept again with his ax and commenced cutting away the plank. It was barely light enough by the stars, to see the ax, and his foothold was precarious, which made his work slow and laborious, but it kept him warm. He hoped to find that the blankets had not fallen out, and if not, they would be dry, and then he would strip the wet clothes from the freezing woman and wrap her up warmly, and thus save her life. There was a little locker, also, at the head of the berth, in which the captain usually kept his rum bottle and sometimes a sea biscuit or two. What if he should find these. Blessed hope! It gave him strength to redouble his blows, praying at every stroke that God would so guide the ax as not to hit one of the spikes, and thus in an instant destroy all chance of success.

"Althea knew what Jim was after, and she prayed earnestly that he might succeed, for as she, with all her dry clothes, suffered from cold, what must be the torture of her darling sister. The blows of the ax rattled faster and faster. It was time, for Althea felt that Leveretta was growing colder and colder. All at once the ax stopped. Althea looked, straining her eyes to see if Jim had accomplished his purpose. She expected to see him stoop down if he had made an opening, to reach in his arm. Instead of stooping he stands erect, looking out upon the water as though trying to make out some object. "Does he discover an approaching vessel? Is succor at hand? Oh, then this dear, dear sister may be saved!"

"Althea dares not speak to ask the question that is struggling to her lips, and the minute of suspense seems an age.

"At length, she said faintly, 'Jim,' and there the question ended.

"'Bress de Lord Gor A'mighty, Missee, bress de Lord, we is n't drifting! Dere am de Saybrook light; and dere am Cornfiel Pint, jus' where he am when we upset. I jus' know him, like he was my brudder. An' I can jus' swim ashore, when de tide turns, like a duck. Hurrah!'

"This was what had caused him to suspend his blows, and had raised his spirits suddenly to such a high pitch. It was no wonder. When he had supposed they were drifting out to sea, as fast as a strong tide and ten-knot breeze could drive them, he suddenly discovered that they had not moved. Why, he did not know. It took him a minute or two to study the landmarks and bearings, and during that time he was too excited to work. At first he was surprised, and so completely astonished that he thought he was already drifting upon some unknown shore. He had no idea that the vessel was anchored. Yet she was. This came of the drunkenness of the men, when they got under way. When the anchor was atrip, Jim ran back to the helm, and the captain and Jack Halstead got it up to the bows and gave the cable a turn round the bits to hold it for the moment, while they got the sails up, and had then entirely forgotten to hoist in and secure it, and so it happened that when the schooner upset, the turn of the cable around the bits fell off, and the anchor dropped into first-rate holding ground, and the cable payed out its full length and held the wreck firmly to its moorings.

"Satisfied, without knowing wherefore, that they were much safer than he dared to hope, Jim increased his efforts, and very soon succeeded in getting a hole through the outside oak plank, exactly opposite a spot that was lined with soft pine, as a part of the ceiling of the berth.

"There he found the longed-for blankets, and tossed them down to Althea. He then groped a little further and found a warm monkey jacket under the mattress. This was comfortable, for as soon as he stopped work he grew cold. He thought that he would enlarge the hole a little and get the mattress out, but then he thought of the bottle, and after a little more cutting and straining hard, he at length succeeded in reaching it and two biscuit. With these he hastened to the raft, and assisted Althea to get the other sufferer wrapped in dry, warm clothing. In all this time she had not spoken, though still alive. She appeared to be chilled to the heart. So they raised her head up a little, and, from time to time, poured a few drops of the rum into her mouth, which she swallowed, and soon gained consciousness enough to notice the cries of her babe.

"Now, gentlemen, you see that our colored friend here—who I have often thought resembled in his looks and kind actions, the one I have been telling you about—has got his supper ready so let us adjourn, until that is disposed of, and then, after I have enjoyed a few minutes with my pipe, if you wish, I will try to finish all you will care to hear of my story before we turn in for the night."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### It is wonderful what perseverance will accomplish.

The supper over and the pipe enjoyed by Scott he resumed his story, taking it up at the point where he broke off so abruptly.

"I was speaking about the condition of the child, I believe.

"Jim said that it was safe as long as it could squall so. He tried to induce Althea to taste of the rum, but she positively refused; having seen enough of the fruits of rum this night to last her a life-time. She was willing, however, to administer it to her sister as a medicine, and even urged Jim to take a drink, but he said that if Missee would not, he would not; but he would eat one of the biscuits, and Althea did the same with half of hers, saving the other in hopes to be able to administer it to Leveretta, as she really appeared to be reviving.

"Jim went back to his work, but he found it no easy task, because, to get a hole large enough to pull the mattress, through he had to cut off one of the large oak ribs of the vessel, and at the same time use the utmost caution not to hit one of the spikes that held on the plank.

It is wonderful what difficult tasks we can accomplish by patient perseverance. This quality Jim possessed to an eminent degree, and at length he succeeded and brought the mattress and laid it down where he could shelter it a little from the wind by two or three boards that he contrived to fix up, and he arranged to have the two women lie down close together, as bedding was scant. He succeeded, however, in fishing up another blanket, which, after wringing as dry as possible, served pretty well for an outside covering.

"The work of mercy of this faithful black fellow was not yet finished. He determined to enter the cabin, although he naturally dreaded to get wet again, but if needs must, he certainly would not hesitate.

"Jim remembered that he had brought down from the house a well-filled basket, in which the ladies had packed a variety of things for their comfort, in case the voyage should be prolonged. He noticed among other things, a nursing-bottle for the benefit of the baby, if its mother should happen to be sea-sick. This basket he had hung upon a stout iron hook in one of the carlines, just in front of the berth that he had reached. 'Now,' he thought, 'if that basket has held on, it am dry, and I spec I can find him, if it is dark; an I'se gwine to try, any how, 'case a little sup of dat milk will just stop that youngster's mouth.'

"So he crawled into the hole, and balanced himself on the edge of the berth and reached over as far as possible and began to feel around for the object of his search.

"'By gorra,' he cried out directly, 'here he am, all safe, jus' as I put him. Now my little sailor boy, dis darky am a gwine to put you out to nuss. An' I spec here am something, too, for de mammy.'

"Owing to the change of position and the weight of the basket. Jim found it a very hard job to get its handle off the hook, as he could only use one hand. With the other he had to support himself. He was gone so long that Althea began to grow seriously alarmed, not only for Jim's safety, but lest her sister should breathe her last before he returned, even if he was safe, for she felt assured that Leveretta could not live much longer, she breathed so hard and moaned so piteously.

"Althea would have tried to call to Jim, but she was afraid of her own voice, after making one faint effort. Her situation was dismal beyond her power of expression. She said that her only real suffering was during this short half-hour—though it seemed a very long one that Jim was absent. For the first time she recollected that the Captain and Jack Halstead were, as she supposed, dead in the cabin, and that idea was horrible. What if they were not dead, but only crazed with rum and enraged at their supposed confinement. At one time she fancied that she heard voices. It was only Jim talking to the basket. What if the two desperate men overpowered him, and thus left her alone with her dying sister and starving babe, by-and-by to perish herself with starvation.

"It was sorrowful afterward to hear this girl tell of the strange fantasies that beset her during this terrible half-hour of solitude. As long as Jim was where she could see him, or hear him work, or could speak to him, she felt that she was in the society of the living. When he disappeared through that hole, it seemed as though the sea had swallowed up all beings with whom she could communicate. To add to the horrors that beset her the wind had all died away, so that every creak and groan of the wreck was mournfully audible. While the wind blew its wildness was natural, not fearful, and its surges swallowed up all minor sounds.

"I must now let Althea continue this story in he own words as she related it to me a short time after the occurrences.

"'I really fancied,' said she, 'not that I was going, but that I had gone mad, and that these were the moans that I had read of, heard in bedlam. Never before in my life was I so glad to see any human being as I was to see that dear, good black face, and hear him speak, though his words were anything but comforting, for he said:

"'I is got him, missee, got him?'

I replied, "Oh, for Heaven's sake let him go. Which one is it, Jim?"

"Oh, nary one of dem, what you think, missee, but him basket, and all dem tings what you put in him. Dem odder two men went off out to sea, after de boy, two, three, six hour ago. You nebber see dem agin. Dey all three am done gone, dead sure. Dis is what I bin after."

"Oh, Jim, what a blessed, dear, good soul you are. May God reward you forever. Let me see the basket. There was a little nursing-bottle of milk in it If I can only warm it a little in my hands, I will feed this poor hungry babe."

"Oh yes, missee, I thought of him too, and fust ting fore I get de basket off de hook, I get dis little bottle out and put him in my bosom next to de skin, Spec he is little sort of warm fore dis time. He feel so. There he am, missee, try him."

"Jim, you are the most thoughtful of human beings. I never can be sufficiently grateful."

"I took the bottle," said Althea, "and although its contents were not quite as warm as an old woman nurse would have prescribed, the chill was taken off, and the child took the milk greedily, and in a few minutes after was asleep. This gave me more opportunity to pay attention to Leveretta. By Jim's advice I broke up a little cake in a tumbler with some milk, and some rum, and tried to feed it to her, but she could only swallow a little of the liquid. That revived her so that she spoke for the first time coherently since she sunk into that dreadful chill; and this gave me great encouragement, although her words were not cheering.

"Tell him, sister, that it is God's will that I shall never see him again, but that I die with my heart full of love—love for my dear husband and all his relatives—love for my father and mother—love for all. There is no being that I hate. Tell Abel, as he loves me, never to separate my child from you, my dear sister. I know that you will take care of him. Tell them all that I forgive those whose dreadful crime of intoxication caused my death; and as I forgive them, so I believe my Maker has freely forgiven me. Now, sister, stoop down, let me kiss you and send my last kiss to my husband. Is my babe asleep? Do not disturb him. Perhaps his life depends upon this sleep. Jim, let me take your hand, but for it we should all have perished long ago. You have saved my child for its father, and he will bless you for it, and God will bless you, and I thank you. But now I can speak no more. Farewell, sister. Remember my last dying word is my love to my husband."

"There was a little further sound," said Althea, "but I hardly knew at the time whether it was Leveretta's dying breath, or my own, or Jim's sobs. Poor fellow, I was afraid that his heart would break. He had never realized the possibility that this dearly-loved being was in danger of dying; and the shock was, therefore, more terrible upon him than upon me, because I was certain from the first that she could not endure through the night.

"I now had another trouble to contend with. Jim's continual activity and hard labor to make us comfortable, had kept him warm; but inactivity, coupled with the sudden shock and overwhelming grief for Leveretta's death, had produced its natural effect—prostration and chill. I heard his teeth chatter, and the sound was horrible. I spoke to him and found that he could hardly articulate. I saw at once that the shock and fright of this unexpected death was likely to produce a serious effect upon him, similar to what the sudden fright and cold water had upon Leveretta, that is, first a chill and then prostration. I determined at once what I must do. I knew that he was in the habit of taking rum, and I also thought that he had probably eaten nothing but that one hard biscuit since breakfast, and as it was now long after midnight, his system was exhausted with severe labor, cold, mental excitement, and want of food. I took the bottle and poured the tumbler half full of rum and filled it up with milk, a bottle of which I found in the basket. I handed the glass to him, saying, 'here, Jim, drink this milk.' If I had said 'rum,' I was afraid he would again object. He swallowed it readily, and in two minutes began to revive. In a short time he was able to eat, and in half an hour was quite himself again, and pressing me to eat also, which I did to encourage him—not to gratify my appetite. By-and-by, Jim started up with an exclamation: 'Fore God, missee, the tide am turned, and now I can go ashore.' But I begged him not to leave me. I could not bear the idea of being left alone, nor would I hear of his exposing himself to the danger of swimming so far in the dark. I told him to wait till daylight, when he could see the beach, and if it was as near as he supposed, then he might try it, if we were not previously discovered, as I was almost sure we should be, for I knew there were several farm-houses near the water. Finally, when I would not let him swim away, he proposed to cut loose from the anchor and drift on shore with the tide. This I objected to, lest the wind should rise off shore as suddenly as it fell, and drive us hopelessly, as it had the poor boy on his piece of the wreck, far out to sea. There was really nothing for us but patient waiting, tiresome as it was, and almost past endurance.

"At length, after hours of silent listening to the ripple of the tide, and knowing by the sound that it was nearly slack, with the constant fear upon my mind that Jim would renew his determination to swim ashore, he startled me by suddenly springing up and looking, or trying to look, intently toward the mouth of the creek, holding himself at the same time in a listening attitude. I, too, strained my ears, but heard nothing. He did. Directly he broke out with his habitual expression, 'Fore God, missee, dem am oars. I know de sound mighty well. Hark, now.'

"I did and could distinguish that peculiar sound of a single pair of oars, as it floats over the water in a still clear morning, and I think that I never heard sweeter music.

"Do you think," I said to Jim, "that it comes this way?"

"Oh yes, missee, he come dis way, but am not sartin he come so far down. Him up de creek yet. You hear different sound when he comes out on the flats. There, now, you most don't hear 'em at all. Dat's 'cause he under the bank where the cedar bush am thick. I know ebbery inch ob dis shore, jus as well as I know him up in Glasenbury. I know too what dat boat am after. He gwine a ducking. Jus' about daylight dem duck ober in Connecticut Riber come in one big black stream from de cove below Saybrook Landin', across Cornfiel Pint, to feed here on dese flats when de tide runs out. That man am comin' down to get a good place to shoot fore light. Dare now, de boat am getting out de creek, but I fear he won't come down far enough dis way. Can tell mighty soon by de way he go.'

"So we listened again earnestly. Oh, how my heart leaped out over the dark water toward the sound of the measured stroke of those oars. Monotonous, but still musical, for they sung of rescue out of the very gates of death, where four out of seven human beings had been taken, including the strongest, and leaving the weakest. But I knew very well that that weakest one could not survive long, in our present situation, without fire and warm food. So I prayed, I hope sincerely, that our kind overruling Father would direct that boat to our relief While thus engaged, my heart sank, for the noise of the oars ceased."

"'They hab pulled in by the big oak,' said Jim, 'they won't come down to the lower stand, that am a fact. Dis chile must see if he am got any noise left dis morning.'

"So he scrambled up on one of the yards, as high as he could above the water, and, after adjusting himself and his throat for the effort, he sent out, it appears to me, such a volume of voice as I never heard any mortal utter before—'boat ahoy!' And this he repeated at intervals of half a minute, perhaps twenty times.

"How those words did roll over the still, smooth water, and rebound in echoes from the shore. How I did strain my ears to catch an answer. By-and-by, between Jim's cries, I thought that I caught a faint 'halloo,' and told him that he was answered. Then he seemed for a minute or two to be getting strength for one grand effort, and then as I saw a faint streak of daylight coming up out of the East, his voice rang out louder and clearer than ever. To this there was no mistake about an answer. It was not a mocking echo, it was the united voice of two men, to which Jim gave all his strength in one grand reply. Instantly, in the direction of the place where he had supposed the boat had touched shore, we saw a bright flash, followed by the report of a musket, and this directly by a second flash and report.

"I think I shall be never able to hear the noise of a gun again without having recalled my sensations of gratitude to God, which I felt at that moment. And these reports were followed by another welcome sound. It was the noise of the boat's oars. It was not the same that we had heard at first. Then it was slow and steady, as though the rower was in no hurry, and desired to make as little noise as possible. Now there was energy in every stroke, and one followed another, as though life depended upon speed.

"'That boat jumps,' said Jim, 'at every lick. Him here in less dan twenty minutes. Gorra, but I guess I know who pull him. Don't know anybody in dese parts can make dat stroke but Jock Bushnell, in his ole whaleboat. Now him stop, take obserwation. Must let him know where away we am, 'cause they can't see us no how.'

"With that he sent out another 'boat ahoy,' and was answered, 'aye, aye;' then there was a little noise as though shifting the oars, and the strokes recommenced. Then Jim said, 'that's Jock's brother, Bob. He am a landsman. He don't pull dem long whale-boat strokes, but they am coming mighty fast.'

"Then there was another stop in the rowing and a voice seemed to come out of the dark water, 'Where away are you? What is the matter?'

"'Right ahead, Sir, jus' as you lay. We are on a wreck. You can't see us, 'cause the schooner's black bottom am dat way. Dat's you, Massa Jock Bushnell? I know'd it by the stroke. You got de ole whale-boat. I mighty glad, 'cause we is got a precious freight, two women and baby, only one on 'em am dead.'

"By this time the boat was round the stern and a man threw Jim the boat's line, and ranged alongside. I noticed the time now was just as the streaks of light began to shoot up to the zenith, so that we could distinguish objects faintly. A voice in the boat said:

"'Why, Jim Baker! is that you? And is this the Abel? Why, you left The Point all right last night. What's the matter? Were you top-heavy? I told Bob so. I never saw the Abel stagger as she did when she came to at The Point. Where's Adams?'

"'Dead, Sir.'

"'And Jack Halstead?'

"'Dead, Sir.'

"'Were they both drunk? Ah, you needn't answer, I know they were. And the boy?'

"'Drifted out to sea. He's lost too.'

"'Well, no matter for him, the young reprobate, only it belies what my father always said, that he would be hung yet. I know that he was drunk, for I saw him. And so you were the only sober one, and all there is left alive on board?'

"'Oh no, Massa Jock. Dere was Massa Atwater's wife and child and sister, in the cabin.'

"'And they are all drowned? Oh, Heavens! Can't we get them out? Why, it is enough to make a man's blood run cold. Are they in the aft cabin?'

"'Not there, not there.'

"He said this hurriedly, as he saw Jock moving toward the cabin window, 'Dey am on de raft alongside.'

"'What, alive? Why the plague didn't you say so at once? Pull round, Bob. Throw in the line, Jim. There, steady.'

"And he sprang on the raft with the line in his hand, which he handed to Jim who had jumped down to meet him. I saw, as he moved toward where I was sitting, that he was a stout, sailor-looking young man, six feet high, with a manly countenance, and he greeted me with ease and politeness.

"'I beg your pardon, Miss, for stopping a moment to ask questions, but I was not aware that you were here. Is your sister asleep?'

"'Alas, yes, never to wake,'

"At that he knelt down quickly and pulled back the blanket, and placed his hand upon her cold face to satisfy himself that there was no hope. I heard a bitter groan, and saw the tears fairly rained down upon that dear sister, as he said, 'and our warm hearth so near, and this boat and our hands idle. Oh, that I could only have known it; how easily I could have saved her. Robert?'

"The other man was close beside him, but the first one was so absorbed in his grief at the sight before him that he did not notice his brother until he answered, 'here.'

"'All right. We will lift the mattress and its occupant right into the bow, and this lady into the stern, where you will support her, while I pull up.'

"He evidently thought that I could not rise, because, having the babe in my lap, I had not risen, but I soon assured him that I was quite sound, and only kept still on account of the child in my arms. Then he said,

"'I really do not know how to address you. Is it Miss or Mrs. Atwater?'

"I answered in the fullness of my heart that I wished it had been my fate to die, if my brother's wife could thereby have lived, to which he replied, 'God bless you; but He knows best what is right.' Then they picked up the mattress and laid it carefully in the boat, and directly we were all ready. It was now almost fully light, and, as we pulled around the stern, a sudden idea seemed to strike the one called Robert, who was younger and much lighter and also more diffident than his brother.

"'Hold up, Jock. That cabin window is open. May be there's something in there that this lady would like to have. I can go in easily and get it, wet or dry.'

"Fortunate thought. I told them that there was a basket of baby's things, that I should like. No quicker said than the boat lay up close, and while Jim held her the young man leaped in at a single bound. I was sorry to see him get so wet, but he did not seem to mind it more than a duck would. Directly he handed out the basket, wet to be sure, but to be eaily dried. Then he fished up our trunk and sundry other articles, and passed them out, and then came dripping himself.

"'Now, Jock, let me have the oars and I will soon get warm.

"During the passage, which was a short one, Jim related all the causes and incidents of the wreck, not forgetting to give me a good deal more credit than I deserved for fortitude, considering how dreadfully frightened I was while he was in the cabin.

"As we went up the creek we passed two or three houses, and Jock, as the others called him, as if in excuse for not going ashore at the first one, said, 'We might land here, but I tell you what it is, Miss, there is nobody in this neighborhood that knows what to do with that baby as well as my mother, and she can take care of you too, and beside that, we left a roaring fire in our kitchen, while these houses are all cold; nobody is up yet. Shan't I pull now, Bob, I think the tide is against you here in the creek. That is our house, Miss. Do you see that those windows look warm? There is my mother; she has heard Bob's stroke, and has come to the door to see what has brought us back so soon. You will love my mother as soon as you see her and hear her speak. I've been shipwrecked too, and the very thought of that blessed woman kept me alive. I have often warmed myself by that fire when I was on an iceberg, and a dream of my mother would almost cure a fever. Pull easy now, Bob, there's some old piles in the stream, hereaway. Now let her come, stern on, and I will jump out and lift her up the beach.'

"'No, no, I am already wet. You keep dry so as to lift the lady if necessary.'

"This little dialogue was pleasant to me, showing as it did, the character of these two brothers. I had no doubt, from the evidence of their words, about the goodness of their mother. I had still less when I saw her pleasant face and heard her sweet voice as she came hurriedly down to the boat and said:

"'What is it, Jonathan? Oh dear! A woman and her little babe! And both almost perished with the cold, I am sure. Do help the poor creature right in by the fire. I've got some nice hot tea. Let me take the babe. How sadly it does cry. But that won't hurt it much; it only shows its lungs are strong, though I dare say it may be cold and hungry, but I venture it will live. But its mother, dear soul, ain't you almost perished? Do help her out carefully, Robert. Why, you are all wet. How did it happen?'

"'A shipwreck, mother. They have been on the wreck all night. You can see it from the door-step. There, just outside of Cornfield Point.'

"'Yes, yes, I dare say. I will look at it by-and-by. I want to get this precious little darling and its mother into the house and right into a warm bed, the very first thing. That will be better than to go near the fire at first. Susan, here, you take the babe, and get something warm for it, and pull off its damp clothes. Susan is a first-rate nurse. Molly, you put some coals in the warming-pan, and hurry and warm the bed in the square room. There's a fire there, or was last night; so it's not cold. La me, but you are a young woman to be a mother and endure such hardships so soon after getting out, for your babe don't look to be over two months' old.'

"As soon as I got a chance to put in a word I explained that the poor child's mother was still in the boat.

"'What! why I did not see any other woman.'

"No, I said, she was under that sail, forward. This babe's mother was my brother's wife; one of the most beautiful and good women in the world. It was my brother's vessel that was wrecked.

"'And who was your brother? Is he lost? No, well then it will nearly kill him. Don't you think so, to lose such a wife? There now, as soon as you are in bed, and get a little hot tea, I'll leave you to Susan, and Molly and I will have the body brought right straight up to the house and taken care of. Has she a mother? Yes. Oh dear! Oh dear!'

"And away she went to perform this new duty to the shipwrecked souls thus so unexpectedly thrown upon her hospitality, leaving me with Susan, who fully justified her character of 'good nurse' to both of us; for she soon had the babe fed and dressed, and then laid it in my arms to sleep while she fed me, and then we both slept, hour after hour, as sweetly as though I was in my own bed at home, except that I dreamed of two or three shipwrecks, and once that I was going to Leveretta's wedding. She was not, however, about to marry my brother; it was some bright being that I could only faintly see in the distance.

"When I awoke, that good mother and daughters were all watching and waiting for me, and the old lady came and put her arm around my neck and kissed me again and again, and so did the girls, and I suppose I expressed my gratitude warmly.

"'And so, you are really Deacon Atwater's daughter? And that beautiful angel in the other room was Abel's wife? Oh dear! Oh dear! It will kill him. Jonathan has written a letter to sort of break the news, and sent it off by the post. And he has written another to her father; and Seth Chapman is going right to York, 'deed I 'spose he's gone 'fore now, and he'll go right up and tell her father, soon as they land. And we have laid out the corpse, and all the town e'en most has been here to see it, and they say that it is the most heavenly-looking face that any mortal ever looked at. And you, my dear, you are so much the better for this sleep. Susan, you take up little darling; he is hungry again. And you, my dear, do you think that you can take a little chicken broth? I have got some real nice. I am sure I don't know how I can do enough for you. Jim has told me all about you; how nobly you kept up your courage and saved the baby's life, and took care of its mother until she died, and how you saved his life when he took a chill. I'm sure there ain't many such girls as you in this world. I shall love you, as long as I live, almost as well as I love my own.'

"And did Jim tell you of his own manly, brave actions? No? Then I shall, for he deserves more than I can say in his favor. But won't you let me get up now, for I am quite rested and feel very well, and able to eat anything you choose to give me?

"'Why yes, certainly, if you wish. Here's your clothes, all nice and dry, and I've had your trunk unpacked and all the things taken out and hung up carefully. I reckon your hat is spoiled though.'

"No matter for that. Is Jim about, and how is he?

"'He is all right. He has gone with the boys and all hands down to the wreck. Cap'en Clark says he can bring his sloop round and anchor off the three trees, and carry a line from her mast-head in shore, and then with a double block-tackle, they can right the Abel, after clearing away the deck-load and sails, and he'll guarantee to have her pumped out and round to The Point 'fore to-morrow morning. So the neighbors have all gone down to help,'cause we have all heard of your father, and my boys know your brothers ever so well. Come, now, I declare, how well you do look since you've got off that great rough pea-jacket, and got your own rig on so neat. Why, you are a real nice-looking girl, and only to think, I took you for this child's mother. Well, for the matter of that, you might as well be as that poor little soul that has gone to her final rest. I thought my heart would break while we were laying her out. There wasn't a dry eye in the house, when they went in to look at her. Poor Jim, I never did see any creature take on so; and my Robert was almost as bad. His heart is so tender.'

"And do you think I can get up the river to-day. I am quite well enough, and you know how important it is that I should do so, and I am sure that my brothers would be willing to pay any expense. My sister has always declared that she wished to go to rest in our old burying-ground, upon the border of that beautiful little lake that she used to sit and look out upon from her chamber window of the old Atwater House. That wish must be gratified. Singular, too, that she had a presentiment for three or four years that she should die young, and that our family would all follow her to the grave.

"'Did she dream it, and did it make her unhappy?'

"Oh, no, not unhappy. She was always cheerful—always happy, and always made every body that she came in contact with equally happy. I think my father never loved one of his own daughters better than this; and I am sure that good old Minister Williams thought her the best pattern for all girls to imitate that he ever knew. No, I do not think that she dreamed it—it was simply a presentiment that her life would be a very short one. Not that she was sickly or in any way feeble; on the contrary, she was a pattern of sound health, as of everything else. I remember how calmly she told my brother, when he asked her to be his wife, these very words: 'Yes, Abel, gladly, if our parents are all willing. I know that your brother and sisters are. And you know how dearly I love you—that I have never loved any other man; and I know how you love me, and that is what pains me, for I am sure that you will have to part with me soon. It is of no use to talk to me about this singular presentiment, it is fixed upon my mind, and I want you to look at the possibility of the event calmly, and be calm as I will when it occurs. And I do not want you to mourn for me so as to make yourself forever disconsolate and unhappy. You need not say that 'these are singular sentiments' for a girl on the eve of marriage. They are such sentiments as we should all deliberately entertain; and the natural incident of death should enter into all the calculations of men and women before marriage, and during all their wedded life, and then the event, when it did come, would not bring with it such a terrible train of misery. If we are always ready to die we shall be fit to live.' Was not that a beautiful sentiment?

" 'Indeed it was, and it is beautiful to hear you repeat it, and to see how calmly you accept from Providence this inevitable calamity. You really teach us all a lesson, Miss Atwater, that amply repays us; yes, tenfold, for the little trouble we have had, and for which you are so grateful, and I am sure very welcome.'

"Still, I must ever be thankful to you and your girls for your motherly and sisterly kindness. And your sons, I am certain that I never shall forget their delicate conduct. But let us return to the subject of getting up the river.

" 'Well, now, we have talked that matter all over. Capt. Clark is our almanac, and he says the wind will come out Sou'west with the next flood tide, and blow cats and dogs; and that's why they hurried to secure the wreck, 'fore it got on the flats. Wan't it queer, though, about that anchor? It does seem as though the Good Father protected you. Capt. Clark is sure if it hadn't been for that, you would have been now outside of Montank, fresh as the wind was, Nor'-Nor'-West. Well, as I was saying, the wind will be Sou'-West, and the tide favorable, and Capt. Clark says that he could run the Reindeer up afore morning, if so be you really think you *must* go, and that will be better than to try to go in a wagon, as Jonathan thought at first you would have to do; but that would be dreadful tedious for one that has endured such a hardship as you have; and then, as I told him you could never get along with the baby that way. But he said 'then you could leave it here,' and for the matter of that, so you could; and I think that you had better do so anyhow, if you do go on the Reindeer, for she hasn't got such a nice cabin, the boys say, as the Abel had.'

"Well, no matter, it will answer very well, and I think that I must go, and must take the baby with me.'

" 'Well, then, mother,' said Susan, 'I will go along with her, and come back on the sloop with Capt. Clark. He is only going to take in a part of a load, and that won't hinder him but a few hours. Shall I go mother? Say yes.

" 'Why, first, hadn't you better ask whether you are wanted by Miss Atwater?'

"I will most gladly answer yes, upon one condition, that you and your girls shall never call me Miss Atwater again. I am not used to hearing it. My name is Althea. Call me that, as my mother used to, and as my father and brothers and sisters do now.

" 'Upon those conditions then, I will go with you as nurse.'

"What time can we get away, Mrs. Bushnell.

" 'I don't know rightly, what time the tide suits, 'cause if there's no more wind than now, it's no use to start till it's slack water, and then it will be real tedious, if Capt. Clark's cat-and-dog breeze shouldn't blow, for I suppose it's nigh on to fifty miles. How'msoever, he knows best when to start. It can't be you know until the carpenter gets the coffin done. He said he'd have it ready 'fore night. And then they've got to get the schooner up 'fore they start, I wonder how they come on. I reckon I can see from this window. Why, as I live! Come right here, Althea, and you'll see her already righted. Molly dear, you must run right off, and hurry your dinner, the men will be up directly as hungry as hunters. Do have plenty for everybody, that's a good girl. I guess I had better go and help you, for we must put up a basket of something for Althea, and Susan, and the baby to-night. I think I will roast a chicken; that'll be proper, nice cold; and I reckon you can make a cup of tea on board. Well, now, would you like to go and see her, the dear one that is to go along with you; but she will want none of your food. She is where hunger never enters. Come, then.'

"And she led the way into the other square room, and there was our little angel in her last robes, and, as Mrs. Bushnell said, there were vans a handsomer face upon a corpse in this world. Every feature was as natural as life. One of the Hart girls, whose father has a conservatory, had been up to see Leveretta. She had met her once at her father's studio, and recognized her at a glance. This made her feel such an interest in her that she directly went home and made the most beautiful collection of flowers that I ever saw, and placed some in her hair, and her bosom, and a rosebud in each hand, and a wreath upon her breast—Oh, I never saw anything like it, half so lovely. I was so strangely affected, that I felt as though I should be willing to lie right down by the side of this dear, blessed sister, and go with her to our final resting-place.

"But I am sure that you must be tired of these details. I should not forget that you are a man and cannot be interested in those little trifles, which, in the state of mind I was then in, made a strong impression upon it; yet in the relation, perhaps, I have been tedious. If so, forgive me. What! you want the whole—everything? You are not tired? Well, then, I am; and do you know that it is after 10 o'clock, and that is a late hour for us, here in the country, to sit up. But if you wish we will all meet here again to-morrow evening, and then I will tell you the remaining incidents of this affair, which already seem more like some romance than like real scenes that I have lately passed through. Now, good-night."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### These are straightforward, out-spoken words.

" 'Are you really sure, cousin Daniel,' said Althea, as we took our seats after supper the next evening, 'that you wish me to tell any more? Because you know that I have told nearly every thing about the wreck, and it appears to me, since I have thought it over, that I must have talked a great deal about myself, and what I said and did, that will appear simple, almost childish, to a backwoodsman like you. And then I have spoken so much of what Mrs. Bushnell said, that you will think, I fear, it was the mere talkativeness of an old woman. I hope you won't laugh at her, Daniel, if you do at me, because she was such a dear good old lady, and all her acts were done in accordance with that blessed precept—Do unto others, as ye would that they should do unto you.'

I assured Althea, that there was not a sentence of her narrative that I should be willing to forget, and I should have been really sorry if she had omitted any one of the particulars. I was certainly interested in all the family, into whose loving arms she had been thrown by this act of Providence, and I could not consent to part with them so abruptly. I wanted to hear something more of that manly sailor son, and all about the voyage up the river. Was it very lonely and gloomy? I begged her to go on, as though no interruption had occurred. In this the other girls all joined, for we were in their little sewing-room up stairs, while uncle, and Nathan, and Abel, Parson Williams, and Deacon Griggs, and one or two others, were around the great sitting-room fire-place below. Uncle and the Parson, always had a pipe, and a mug of cider together, upon these evening visits. So Althea being reassured, commenced again.

"I think I told you that Mrs. Bushnell saw that they had got the Abel righted; and that the boys would soon be up; and probably bring several hungry men with them. This was the case. I heard the oars, as the men pulled up the creek, and you cannot imagine how those sounds carried me back into a reminiscence of painful emotions. As they came up to the landing, I could hear some boisterous talking and laughing of the men, and that shocked me seriously. How unreasonable I was, to think that mére strangers should feel my sadness, or that shipwreck and death should affect those to whom they were familiar scenes, as they did me in my first experience. I could not realize that every body had not lost the dear sister that I had. I could not laugh; how could others do so? Their voices were to me all discordant. No, not all; for I heard one that appeared tuned to musical tones, say: 'Mother, do you think that you can give all of us a bite of dinner? I am sorry to trouble you so, but we have been at work like sailors, and can eat like them, too. It is past dinner time, and some of the men would have three miles to walk, before they could get any at home. I know that I ought to have told you before I went down. I am sorry, mother, that I forgot it.'

"Perhaps you will say, 'I do not see anything very musical in this; but do not laugh, Daniel, I am too sad and serious, for that. Besides, I am going to ask your advice about something directly, or else I should not tell you how those words affected me. I thought when I heard them, that the woman who got Jonathan Bushnell for a husband, would be fortunate; for a son who was so respectful and kindly spoken to his mother, had just the qualities to make a good woman happy, as her husband. Husband! at that word, I fairly cried, to think it should come into my mind when it was so full of grief for the husband of Leveretta; and when I heard Mrs. Bushnell's reply, I wondered how I should think that a man with such a mother, could ever want a wife.

"'It is no matter, my son; I thought of it; and Molly has got dinner all ready to dish up, and the table set for a dozen; and if that ain't enough, she will put on more plates, that's all. There's dinner enough for all of ye, and welcome. We have had ours. I cooked a chicken for Miss Atwater; though she says we mus'n't call her that, but Althea. Well, it is a pretty name, and she's just the nicest girl I've seen this many a day. If I was a man—well, I a'n't, and so I won't say. Now, Jonathan, here's a towel; take 'em right round to the well, to wash, and by that time we'll have dinner on the table. Tell 'em, Jonathan, when they come in, not to be noisy. I know it's natural, but then it's so solemn to have one of our fellow creatures, and she so young, laid out in the house. Oh she does look so lovely. You shall all see her after dinner.

"'I was there with Susan, when they came in to look at poor Leveretta, and intended to have escaped by the other door, because I felt too sad to endure the thought of even being in the room with those who I fancied were coarse and unfeeling. I had not yet recovered from the shock that their loud talk and laughter had given me a little while since. As I heard them coming I hurried away, but could not get out, as the man with the coffin was coming in at that moment. Susan and I then sat down looking out of the window, until we could retreat without seeming rude, even to men I had accused of rudeness. How much I was mistaken in their character, for they were all affected to tears at the sight of the corpse, and some of them sobbed bitterly. No, not all: the man I idolized as a hero, looked a moment with dry eyes. Could it be, I thought, that he never sheds a tear. I was mistaken again, for seeing Susan and me, he came directly over to us, as though he divined that we were anxious to get away unobserved. He took our hands a moment in his, without speaking, and then led the way into the other room—and then, nature would show itself, for as he stooped down to kiss Susan, I saw the big tears dropping from his eyes to mingle with hers. We three were now alone in this room, and there this brave sailor kneeled down and buried his face in the bed clothes and sobbed like a child; and then came the words of the Lord's prayer, child-like. In a few minutes he rose up entirely calm, saying: 'I hope that I may be a better man, for this chastening. Do you feel able, Miss Atwater, to make the journey to-night? If you do, you may get ready as soon as convenient. I understand my sister is going with you. I am very glad of it, for I have promised Capt. Clark to help him work the vessel up. We have a fair wind, the tide will serve in two hours, and if we are ready, we can make a good run before dark; and possibly we may not be obliged to anchor at all. We shall do our best. I will go and see about the wagons, and get myself ready. Is the baby asleep?'

"Before the two hours were up, we were on board the Reindeer. The parting with Mrs. Bushnell, was as affectionate, as though she had known me all my life, instead of a few hours. Indeed her words were very flattering to my vanity.

"'I love my own children dearly,' she said, holding my hand, as I stood waiting for the wagon, 'but I think I could love you equally well. I do love a strong, courageous girl, that can meet danger and suffering, and loss of dear friends, under most trying circumstances, as you have done. You don't know how the noble manly qualities of my oldest son endear him to me. Robert is a good boy and very affectionate, and I love him fondly; but Jonathan has not only the same good qualities, but something that commands respect. You don't know him yet. I wish you did. There, good-by. Heaven protect you. Mind what I told you, Susan; you take care of the baby to-night, so as to let Althea sleep. Do be careful with the horses, Robert, and come back as soon as possible, for you and Molly will have a sight of work to do after you get home.'

"I had never felt my heart more full of affection toward any woman since I lost my own mother, than I did in parting from this one, till that day a total stranger. I did not wonder that she said I did not know 'her oldest son' yet, for when a really handsomely dressed gentleman jumped out to hand us into the wagon, as it drove up to the doorstep, I did not at first realize that it was that 'oldest son.' I had heretofore only seen him in his working garb, which was now stowed in his ship bag, under the wagon seat, to be resumed, as soon as he got on board.

"I forgot to tell you that the old minister came and made a most appropriate prayer, before the coffin was removed from the house, and then rode at the head of the procession, nearly two miles down to The Point. It seemed as though all the neighborhood, men and women, had gathered to pay their respects to the unfortunate shipwrecked people; and they all stood upon the bank, with hats raised, while the coffin was carried on board, and sent their prayers and blessings after us, as we sailed away.

"I had missed Jim, but had not thought to inquire what had become of him, but I found the faithful fellow on the Reindeer, and was indeed glad to see him again, sound and well, and told him so warmly.

"'Tank you, Missee; and you tell Massa Abel dat I is all right, and I is gwine to stick by de old schooner, till he come down, or send some one. I will get her all clean up nice as new, 'fore next week. Dem folks over to de place where you was, am gwine to buy de lumber what was in de deck load; and Capt. Clark, he will see 'bout expense of getting de Abel round here; dats all de word I'se got to send. Good-by. I mighty glad to see Massa Jack am gwine along. No accidents where he am. Good-by.'

"And he sprung ashore, over a fearfully wide space, between the wharf and the vessel, as she filled away, in the strong south-west wind that Capt. Clark had predicted.

"There never was a more lovely Autumn evening; so in contrast with the squally one of the previous day. When the sun went down, all in a glow of gold, painting such lovely pictures over the hill tops, it awakened my soul to an intense feeling of devotion; and my voice almost involuntarily broke out, singing that beautiful hymn, which begins:

'Awake my soul—the setting sun,
In glory tells, his course is run;
And night comes on with all its care,
To bid my soul for death prepare.'

"I was on deck at the time; Capt. Clark was at the helm; Susan was in the cabin; and I did not see her brother. I had scarcely finished the first line, before I became sensible that I was not singing alone. At first a sweet, womanly voice came up from the cabin, and that was followed by a manly one, equally sweet, that appeared to come from the rigging, over head, as indeed it did, for Mr. Bushnell had gone up there for some purpose. Then Capt. Clark joined in with a strong but good bass voice, and he was followed by the two men forward. At this moment, we ran along side of another sloop, and three or four persons on that, joined our chorus, and I do not think an evening hymn was ever offered up in sweeter music, nor apparently with finer feelings of devotion and thankfulness for the mercies of the day, nor with more heart-felt mourning for a lost friend: and for the moment, the sweetness of the music helped to soothe our great sorrow, while it tended to draw me closer and closer in communion with those who had united with me in this little but fervent outburst of devotion. It appeared to me that I had never known any thing of so trifling consequence in itself, as the singing of this hymn, to bring such instant relief to an almost overburdened mind. And beside, it provided at once, a channel of communication between us; for I had been sad, and almost silent, and out of deference to me the others had remained so too. I had not even spoken with Capt. Clark, but now he opened the conversation with a remark upon my voice, and a recommendation to continue the exercise, as it was well calculated to save me from being melancholy. I answered that I was very far from being so, although I had for a time felt as though I could not speak without shedding tears, but that I was now quite relieved of that oppressive sensation. I then went on, I fear, with more words than was necessary, to thank him for his kindness to me as well as the generous interest he had taken in saving my brother's property. I think that I must have talked volubly, for I heard him say, as I went below: 'I tell you what it is, Jock, she knows how to use her tongue; don't you think so?'

"Supper was now called, and although good Mrs. Bushnell had fears of scarcity, there was a bounteous table, and I found that, notwithstanding Capt. Clark's rough sailor manners, he did not forget to invoke God's blessing, and give him thanks for the good things spread before us. I remarked that we did not intend to tax his hospitality, as Mrs. Bushnell, supposing he might not be provided for passengers, had sent something along.

"'Ah,' said he, 'this young man and woman, have got one of the best mothers in the world; you will know that, as soon as you get acquainted with them; but you don't know, perhaps, that my wife is her sister, and of that same careful thoughtfulness. It is to her that we owe the comforts we are enjoying. She knew that the Reindeer was poorly stored for lady passengers, and so she sent down a well filled basket, in which I found some clean sheets, which I hope you will enjoy, as well as her bread and butter, and tea.'

"I assured him that I had no desire to try them immediately, having had a very refreshing sleep during the day, and for a while, as baby was asleep, Susan and I would go on deck with her brother and the captain, and enjoy the pleasant air and starlit scenery, and sing another hymn or two, before we retired for the night. To this all agreed, and as we glided along the course of that most beautiful river, we sent such pleasant sounds over the water, that we saw door after door of the farm-houses near the bank, that we passed, open to let out men, women and children, to listen to our free concert; and in two or three instances, pleasant voices on shore joined ours; so that, although we never forgot for a moment, what was under that old sail, by the binnacle, the evening wore away in sweet devotional enjoyment. I, for one, certainly felt 'it is good for us to be here.'

"At length, Susan and I said good night, and retired to the cabin; as they all said that I must sleep. Susan took up her charge and fed him, and found that he was bright and well, notwithstanding his disposition to sleep, and then we went to our berths; after which Capt. Clark came down and turned in, saying that 'Jock preferred to take the first watch.'

"I was soon asleep and did not wake till after daylight. Then I found the little boy was uneasy, and I got up and dressed and prepared some food for him over the cabin lamp, during which Mr. Bushnell came down and took a seat, after bidding me a pleasant good morning, and inquiring how I had rested. He said, too, that we had made a good run, and should very soon reach our destination. After sitting silent for a few moments, he suddenly appeared to have come to a determination to speak and addressed me something like this, as near as I can recollect:

"'Miss Atwater, I am sorry my sister is not awake, as I should be quite willing that she should hear what I wish to say, and it would be less embarrassing to you, if you felt that you were not alone.'

"Susan at once answered from her berth: 'I am not asleep, brother, and I will listen, if you wish. Go on.'

"'Oh, thank you; I should not be in a hurry, but I suppose we shall be up in an hour, and who knows but we may then part forever from this dear friend; which I cannot think of doing without relieving my mind of what would ever be a burden to it; and I should feel as though I had done wrong to myself and others, if I neglected this only opportunity to speak.'

"Then he addressed himself more particularly to me and continued:

"'I am aware, Miss Atwater, of the impropriety of my course, at such a time as this, but when you hear my excuse, I trust you will pardon any seeming indelicacy in my conduct. I am a sailor, and I hope a frank, honest one. The ship, in which I am going as mate, on a three years' whaling voyage, is now at Sag Harbor, nearly ready for sea, and I am to go on board next week. In an hour I shall part from you, perhaps forever, but it will lighten my labor, and be a guiding star for me to steer by through all these long years, if I could carry with me the hope of finding favor in your eyes when I return. I will not ask you for an answer to this abrupt question now. Take a week to consider it, and consider your own happiness, not mine. At the end of that time, with the consent of your family, write to me; and, oh how I will hope and pray that you will say that I may write to you while I am away; and that if I return able to offer you as unsullied a hand and heart as I could now, that you will then allow me to visit you until you know me better than you have yet had an opportunity of doing.'

"I was so overwhelmed with astonishment that I could not speak. I am sure that I must have appeared silly to him, and quite unworthy of such a noble declaration. Fortunately for my confused ideas, but I fear quite unfortunate for the opinion he must have formed of me, on account of my awkward manner, Capt. Clark, at that moment, called down the companionway: "Jock, will you come up now, and help us shorten sail?" and he darted off as though glad to get away from such a silly girl, to whom he had unwittingly committed himself. I scarcely saw him afterward, and only barely to say "good-by," in the confusion of landing. I did have sense enough, though, to give him my hand, and he shook it heartily at the moment of parting.

"'Now, cousin Daniel, I want your advice. Is it indelicate in me to write to this young man and tell him that he may continue the correspondence? It does seem as though the acquaintance was a very short one, and I am afraid it is improper for me to accept such an impromptu——'

"'Offer of marriage,' I suggested.

"'Yes,' she replied, 'to be as frank and straightforward as he was, that is it. I certainly so understood it, and in my heart, however I may try to gloss it over, that is how I shall always understand it, and I must act accordingly. And that is why I have told you; because I want your advice. I am situated toward you, just as he was toward me. I must speak now or never. I do honestly believe that Jonathan Bushnell is all that I ought to expect in a man, and my greatest fear is that he is too good for a husband for me. I am sure that if I could ever make any man a good wife, I should make him one. Now, what shall I do?'

"Write to him at once and thank him for his straightforward, outspoken words. Tell him that, without entering into any engagement, you will hold his proposition under consideration until he returns, and that then, if, upon a longer and better acquaintance, he desires it, you will listen to his proposition, and treat him with the candor that his conduct deserves. That is what I think."

" 'Oh, do you really? Then I will; and if it does not make him happy, I am sure that it will Susan; for as soon as he left the cabin, she came and put her arms around me, and begged as I loved her, to give her brother a favorable answer. She was sure that he never would have said those words if he had not weighed the full force of every one, and had previously felt in his heart ready to stand by them till death. She had never known him before to express the least preference for any girl. and his mother began to fear that he intended to be a bachelor.

" 'It would be so strange,' said Susan, 'that God, in his mysterious Providence, in taking away the wife of your brother, should provide one for mine. Oh do, for your own sake, as well as his, grant his request, and that favorably; for I am sure there is not a better man on earth; and stiff and formal as he may have seemed to you, in his set speech, he is over-full of affection.'

" 'I am sure it would, indeed, be one of the mysteries of Providence if such an event should grow out of that great misfortune. But as you do not think it would be indelicate in me to write to that good young man, I will treat his proposition with respect; and I am sure that I shall not seek to alter my condition during the three years of his absence, for I have carefully examined my heart, day by day, earnestly and prayerfully, and I believe that further acquaintance with him would end in such regard as he deserves.

" 'Now, sisters, you have listened patiently to my story, and heard such a confession of sentiments as I thought, only one week since, I never should be willing to make to any one, and if you have anything to say contrary to cousin Daniel's opinion, let me hear it at once; else I shall consult father and then write to Mr, Bushnell, as my time is almost up, and I do not think it right that I should let him sail without an answer. I am free to own that my heart yearns toward his, but I will bid it be still, if that is the best, or most womanly course.'

" 'Sister, that is impossible;' said Esterella, who was already on the list of old maids, and generally supposed to know nothing about 'affairs of the heart.' 'You may bid, as much as you please; it never will be still. God directs our affections, and whether best or worst for us, we cannot change them at our will. You already love Jonathan Bushnell, with such force that you cannot change your affection, whether womanly or not to indulge it. You may bid your heart be still, and may imagine that you have made it obey, but you will ever be like cousin Daniel, wedded to your first love. You may wed another man, but while this one lives, you will have hours of thought that you can never drive away, in which the aspiration will come up, in spite of all your efforts: 'Oh that it had been God's will, that I had been his wife!' And then, if you should neglect now to answer from your heart, bitter tears will flow from it, and mar present happiness. I too well remember, one moment of my life, when I lacked sincerity. I said No, with my lips, when my heart would have said Yes, because folly had taught me it would be more womanly. There, Sister, you have my answer.'

" 'And mine.' 'And mine.' 'And mine.' 'And we thank you for your confidence, and hope your sincerity will prove a blessing to you, and a lesson to us. We wish, though, that you had brought your sailor home with you, that we might have seen and judged of his good looks and of his good sense by his conversation.'

" 'You know that was impossible, under the circumstances. I did wish to bring Susan; but she wanted to return with her brother, and he was in a hurry to get back, to attend to his outfit, and I had to part with her hurriedly and in confusion and distress; as you know, the shock was so terrible upon brother Abel, (who had not received the letter sent him), that we feared he would not recover from the convulsions that he fell into upon learning that Leveretta was really dead. I assure you, I had no time for a thought of self, nor any thing connected with any other emotions of the heart than those occasioned by his terrible distress. When at length I found time to think of anything else, and went to look for Susan, to thank her and bid her good-by, I saw the sloop sailing away down the river, almost out of sight. This ends my story, except the letter that I am going to write before I go to bed. Its character will depend entirely upon my father's opinion of this romantic adventure, woven in with our sad affliction.'

" 'Knowing the sterling integrity of father and daughter, and that she would act upon his advice if it planted just such a thorn in her heart as had rankled for years in Esterella's, I went at once to the old gentleman, whom I fortunately found alone in his bedroom, where he had gone to look for some old papers that he desired to use, to refresh his memory upon some matter in conversation.'

" 'Oh, Daniel, is that you?' he said, 'come in and sit down a minute. I have hardly seen you alone yet, we have been so overwhelmed, and I am told that you think you must leave us to-morrow; your business is so pressing. I am sure I thank you for coming at such a time, when every face wears a cloud of sorrow. By the by, don't you think Althea looks terribly careworn? I am afraid the shock has been too great for her nervous system, and reaction is now setting in with bad effect. I noticed her particularly during supper. Her hand trembled, and her eyes looked haggard whenever they turned toward mine.'

" 'Perhaps,' I said, 'I can relieve you a little upon this point. You know that Althea is a child with intense filial affection, and she is compelled to ask you an important question this evening, and she dreads your answer. She must write a letter for me to take with me to New-York, to hurry to its destination, and she cannot write it until she has talked with you. It is that which agitates the dear girl.'

"I then took up the story that I had just heard from Althea, and related it, together with some facts about the family that I had learned from Nathan, to all of which my uncle listened attentively, and then replied:

" 'God bless her, and God bless him too. He is the son of an old friend—a good father, and for aught I know a good mother. I used to think that she was a great talker; that's all the fault I found with her. And this son, I am glad to hear such a good account of him, but——'

"Here there was a little tap at the door and Althea entered, with a look at me, as much as to say: "Oh you wicked man, what have you been about?" Her father said:

" 'Sit down daughter, and I will go on and finish my sentence, just as I should if you had not come in; but Althea must not commit herself to him, until she has an opportunity to know him better. She must write him a letter of thanks from all of us for his kindness, and she may say to him, if he still remembers her, when he returns, that her father would be very glad to see him and know him better.'

" 'Oh, thank you, thank you, my dear father.'

"And she threw herself passionately upon his neck, kissing and crying in the exuberance of her joy Her father said: "I think there is another person present to whom you are indebted for saving you a good deal of embarrassment about addressing your terrible hard-hearted old father."

" 'Indeed, I do thank him, and if love will pay him, he shall have a store of it to draw upon as long as he lives.'

,' She did not kiss me before her father, but as we went out, she caught me in her arms and said: 'Oh, Daniel! what a dear good soul you are. I will kiss you now and love you dearly forever.'

"And so she ran away to her writing-desk in the happiest possible frame of mind to write to the man that she now hoped would one day become her husband. I had forgotten to say that I had exacted a promise from her to let me see her letter, which she accorded, upon condition that I would make any corrections it needed. I still have the copy in my pocket, and you shall judge whether you think I could have made any improvement in its simple style or language if I had made the attempt, which I certainly did not. It was addressed:

"'*To Mr.* JONATHAN BUSHNELL, *first mate of the ship Hecla, care of Capt.* FORDHAM, *Sag Harbor, L. I.*

"'MUCH RESPECTED SIR AND KIND FRIEND: I write agreeable to your request, after having been several days at home, and after having consulted my father, and another relative, in whose judgment I place great reliance, and receiving their approval, as well as that of your dear sister and four of my own You must forgive me for having made known this matter to so many: and I am sure that you will do so, if you call to mind that it was your own suggestion that I should open this correspondence with the full consent of my family. To obtain this, it became necessary for me to relate some of the circumstances which led to my present position. It was a sore trial for me to do so—it seemed to shock every nerve in my whole system to be obliged to make a confession to others of a matter that all girls think must be kept hidden from the whole world. I believe it a false system of education, that leads to this course, and many marriages are contracted thus in secret, which should, and would have been prevented by a little confidence and friendly advice.

"'Still it was a hard matter for me, who have never had any experience in affairs of the heart, to open mine to my most intimate friends, to ask their advice. My cousin Daniel, to whom I referred above, was here from the West, and is to leave to-morrow; and it was therefore necessary for me not to delay beyond this night the dreaded confession. I felt as though I could confide in him better than any one else, because his heart has been torn by the most cruel disappointment that ever mortal had to endure, and although never married, he has been for many years more than a widower.

"'I could find no opportunity to talk with my cousin alone, and finally I commenced, in presence of all my sisters, by an act of courage that might be characterized as desperation.

"'After listening patiently to my simple story, this is his reply: Write to him at once and thank him for his straightforward, out-spoken words. Tell him that you will not treat the proposition of such a man with disrespect, but that you cannot enter into any engagement without further acquaintance.

"'My hardest task was yet to come: to meet my father and repeat my story, and gain his approbation, as I had that of my cousin and sisters; for without that I never should have written you all these words. Indeed, my letter would have been a very short one, and I fear painful to one with such a tender heart as I believe you possess.

"'I have again to thank my cousin for an unsolicited, and quite unexpected, and, as I believe, on his part wholly an accidental conversation with my father, in which he told him more than I could ever have spoken, for my heart was in my throat when I went to him. and I fear that I should have wholly failed had I not found the way already opened.

"'Now, my dear friend, my father's opinion exactly corresponds with my cousin's, as above quoted, and need I say with mine. I am quite willing to say now that you shall find me without change when you return, and should I never see you again, I assure you, in all the sincerity of (I hope) an unsullied heart, that I shall hold your memory as something that I would not forget for all the world.

"'Your prompt answers to the calls of distress—your kind, gentlemanly attention—your sacrifice of important time, to see me and my precious charge quickly restored to my family, is worthy of the highest commendation, which it has from me and all my friends, and it shall surely have my everlasting gratitude.

"'And you shall have more than this: you shall have my daily prayers for preservation from the terrible dangers by which you will be constantly surrounded, and that you may live to return in as good health as you now are; and, I will candidly acknowledge, I will hope that you may return with the same sentiments that you have so kindly expressed to me already.

"'If you should find time amid your many duties of getting ready for your long voyage, I shall be pleased to have you acknowledge the receipt of this letter, and should opportunity occur while you are absent, if you will give me some account of your adventures, I shall read about them with great pleasure.

"'Direct your letters to the care of Fortune Atwater, South Coventry, Connecticut, to one who I hope will always be able to subscribe herself your ever true friend,

'ALTHEA ATWATER.'

"Before I give you any further account of the progress of this affair, I think that I may as well tell you how I happened to be in Connecticut at this particular time. I do this, too, because there is connected with it a somewhat remarkable incident.

"I arrived in New-York the evening of the same day the Reindeer had arrived in the morning at Glastenbury. My intention was to make a very short stay, as I wished to buy some goods for Winter, and the time for getting them out was short. After depositing my baggage at Baker's Tavern, in Wall-st., I called at the Post-Office in hopes of finding a letter, which I expected, containing some funds. It was there; I saw it as the clerk held it in his hands, but he hesitated about handing it to me, and turned to ask some question of a person inside. Then he said: 'There is a letter for Daniel Scott, but it is directed to the care of Schemmerhorn & Co., and contains valuable inclosures, I judge by the amount of postage charged and its appearance, and the Post-master thinks that I ought not to deliver it to a stranger. It will be given to Messrs. Schemmerhorn in the morning, or to you to-night, if any one will vouch that you are the proper person.'

"As I had no voucher, I gave way to the next person who approached the windows, and you may imagine with what delight I heard him inquire: 'Any letter for Antoine Lecandré?'

"I allowed him to receive his letter, and then stepped up in presence of the clerk, touching Antoine as he was turning away, I said: 'Will you vouch that I am Daniel Scott?'

"I think that if I had fired a pistol close to his ear he would not have started quicker. nor exhibited more surprise. His arms were around my neck in a moment, and 'Mon dieu, mon cher ami,' was mixed up with other exclamations in English and French, in a most extravagant manner. As soon as the clerk could slip in a word, he said: 'I think, Sir, that I am entirely safe in delivering your letter. We know Mr. Lecandré very well. The postage is 93¾ cents.'

"'Ah, my friend,' said Antoine, 'you have come in the very nick of time. I have just been to the wharf to meet my daughter. She was not there, but she is coming. I shall go once again directly—before I go to bed. She will be sure to come to-night or in the morning. It is time now that she shall be here. The vessel is perhaps not so fast as I should wish. She is to bring her little boy. He is very small for the journey, and I fear the mother is pretty feeble. She have not fully recovered, and I am therefore very anxious. Ah, my wife will be so very, very glad to see you. We will come right away home. I live in one little cottage, quite out in the country, on the Boston road, in the place called the Bowery. I suppose it must be more than a mile from here. I like it so much better than I did in the city. I have one view from my windows out upon the farm of the old Dutch Governor Stuyvesant. I have painted one pretty little picture of an ancient pear-tree, which he planted himself. You shall see it. Come; we will have our little supper, and then we will come back together to see if Leveretta have arrived in the vessel.'

"I suggested to him to look at the letter; that it might give him some information.

"'No. I saw the post-mark. It is from Saybrook. I have some customers there. They are exceedingly close, and haggle about the price of a picture. This is from them. I think I know the writing. It is no consequence. I shall look into it at my leisure at home.'

"In half an hour after we left Wall st. we were at Antoine's cottage, and, as he said, quite out in the country. It had been a quiet, pleasant walk, and he talked almost incessantly of the joy that he felt, and that his wife would feel in having my visit happen at this time, when their beloved child was coming home with that little grandson, which they had not yet seen.

"If it may ever be said of a father, 'he worships his child,' it might have been said of Antoine. His wife was extremely fond, but she was not of such an excitable nature as her husband. She was, indeed, as he declared she would be, really rejoiced to see me. I found that they had prospered greatly in the few years that they had lived in New-York, and now he was all alive upon the subject of a visit to his native land.

"It was now thirty years, he said, since he had seen his father or brother, and nearly that length of time since he had heard from the latter, and he did not know whether he was dead or alive. He heard that he went to Mexico, and that he became quite celebrated in his profession. But for many years he had not communicated with his family; and the father had written to Antoine imploring him with great earnestness to make him a visit before he died; and it was because he was going that his daughter was coming to visit him.

"After supper, we were about starting to go to the wharf, where the vessel bearing Leveretta was expected to land. As Antoine was putting on his overcoat, he happened to notice the letter he had taken from the Post-Office.

"'Ah, ha! my dear. Here is one more letter from the Hart's. Perhaps they will say now that they will take the picture. It is too late. I have sold him to one Spanish gentleman. You shall read the letter while we are gone, and write them one grand disappointment.'

"Mrs. Lecandré opened the letter and glanced at the signature, and said: 'You are mistaken. This letter is from some gentleman by the name of Bushnell.'

"'Ah, then it is one order, perhaps, for a new picture. You shall tell him I shall take no more order until I return from France.'

"With that we went out, and stood a moment to admire the moonlight scene, during which our ears were pierced with a scream from the room we had just left. We hurried back and found Mrs. Lecandré fallen upon the floor in a fainting fit, holding the letter crushed in her hand. Poor Antoine, how he was distressed, though not seriously alarmed—as he said she had suffered in the same way before, though this appeared the most severe attack.

"We hastened to apply restoratives, and get her into an easy chair. As she began to recover, I noticed her eyes directed earnestly to the letter, and the truth flashed upon me at once that it was the cause of the present difficulty, and I took it gently from her hand, and turned aside and took up the candle to read it. She noticed the movement, and by that time was able to speak, and said:

"'Read aloud; but first, Antoine, prepare yourself for the saddest news that ever letter conveyed to fond parents, We shall never see our dear child again on earth.'

"'Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! What is that you speak? You shall not say that again. You will me strike dead. I shall not live to hear that word once more again. Oh, mon dieu, I shall go mad!'

"It was some minutes before he was calm enough to listen. His wife recovered directly, and was now quiet, strong and resolute, to bear up against this great calamity. With her the first spasm of grief was over, and she bowed her head meekly to the blow—'to the will of God.'

"Her will, and strong, sweet words of submission at length brought her husband to the same condition as herself, and then, at their request, I read the letter.

"I think I can repeat the substance of it. It was addressed to 'Mr. Antoine Lecandré, artist, New-York City," and that led him to suppose it was about business. It read:

'DEAR SIR: It has fallen to my lot to address you a letter which will convey most distressing information. The schooner Abel left Connecticut River last night a little after sundown, with your daughter and child and her husband's sister on board. About an hour after passing the bar, and when off Cornfield Point, a squall struck the vessel, capsizing her almost instantly. The captain, mate, and cook, a boy, were lost immediately. Miss Atwater was on deck and escaped serious injury. Your daughter and child were below. They were rescued through the cabin window by the colored man Jim, who gives me your address. The child is alive and well, and with Miss Atwater is carefully provided for at my mother's house; after spending a dismal night on the wreck. I write while they sleep. I wish I could say the same of your daughter. Alas! her sleeping knows no waking. Her feeble health, her great fright, her cold bath, and long exposure were too much for her powers of endurance. Her spirit passed away during the night, while her head rested in the arms of her heroic sister, who, with the faithful Jim, did all that human beings could to save her life. She is now being prepared for her last rest on earth, and will be coffined this evening, when, if Miss Atwater is able to travel, the body will be taken back to her desolate home. I have already made arrangements to this end.

'I have written in haste in order to save this post, which, if I can do, I shall hope that you may get this letter to-morrow; possibly in time for you to reach the late home of your daughter soon enough to look once more upon her beautiful face—the most angelic one that I ever saw in death.

'There; I hear the postman's horn. Adieu.

'J. BUSHNELL.'

"During the reading of this letter. Antoine and wife had both become as calm as a Summer morn, and as soon as I closed, he said: 'My dear, we must start to-night. There is not a moment to lose. The mail coach leaves at 9 o'clock. I will go and secure seats and have it stop as it passes the door and take us up.'

"I suggested a better plan. He should remain and get ready, and I would go down town and engage the seats, and come up with the stage and see that it stopped at the right place.

"'And,' said both, speaking almost in the same breath, 'you will place us under one more everlasting obligation, if you will accompany us upon this dreadful journey.'

"To this I at once agreed, and left immediately for the stage-office. But, gentlemen, do you know how late it is? I really think that we had better not undertake this ride until to-morrow night. We do not know how long it may prove. Let us rest until we make our next camp. I am sure that you must be tired of my long story, all about myself. Good night. I shall be asleep in five minutes."

## CHAPTER XIX.

### Who are these mysterious midnight travelers?

The anxiety which Scott's companions manifested the next night to get settled in camp, and have supper over and out of the way, showed plainly that they were not "tired of his long story." On the contrary, their interest had increased at every step of its recital. A little incident proved this. During supper an order came from the officer of the day, giving names of men detailed for patrol duty during the night, which included that of "volunteer Daniel Scott."

"Gentlemen!" said Farnham, "a pony purse, to hire a substitute." Three dollars were made up instanter; which was quite enough, under ordinary circumstances, to have hired three men, but it was no temptation to any one who belonged to that mess, and had heard Scott's previous stories. Mike Haskins said he would find the man, and soon brought in a fellow known all through the camp as "the smoking Dutchman"—(our old acquaintance, Jo. Spraker)—who, Mike said, "would take that little pool, gentlemen, and stand his tour, foot or horseback, in camp or on patrol, half the night or all of it; it's no odds to him. He'll jist answer Daniel Scott at muster, and nobody'll know the odds in the smoke."

Jo took the silver with an awkward attempt at thanking the givers, and assured them he would stand the duty required, and repeat it to-morrow night for the same amount. "By sure, if you vants a man vats cood for de money, you vill find him mit the Indiana rangers. Vat is ter name I ish to be—Taniel Shop? Var' well."

That little matter being thus easily settled and supper over, the ring was formed, and Scott went on with his story.

"When I got to the stage office, perhaps half an hour before starting time, and said I wanted to go to Hartford, the clerk answered: 'All full, inside and out, and one over. That gentleman is very anxious to go on. If you wait an hour or two, there may be other applications, enough to put on an extra.'

"I turned to look at the person indicated, to see whether he would probably be an agreeable companion for us, if I should take an extra, which I at once determined to do, whatever might be the expense. I must own that first appearances were not very prepossessing; and I was upon the point of turning away without speaking to him, as I saw that he was a foreigner, and a very swarthy one at that. He wore a many-colored Mexican poncho, with a Spanish hat, under which was a luxuriant crop of grizzly black hair, and his face was hidden with the same kind of hirsute covering. Nothing of his features was visible but his eyes, and they were so black and sharp that they fairly sparkled. They reminded me instantly of Antoine's, as they looked at the moment he recognized me in the Post-Office. As he had heard the conversation with the clerk, and seen me turn to look at him, it was too late for me to retreat, and so I determined to face the matter squarely, and walked right over to him and said:

“ ‘You wish to go to Hartford?’

“ ‘Oui, Monsieur. Pardonner moi.’ But I forget. You do not speak French. And I shall not so well speak Anglaise. I do vera much want to go to Hartford. I am just arrive in the city from Mexico, and shall no longer stay than possible. I have not nowhere yet to sleep this night, because I thought I would go at once upon this little journey, which I must go before I sail for France, and I have vera much too little time.’

“ It is strange how much there is in the tone of a man's voice to win us to him. I had no sooner heard this unprepossessing character speak, than all my prejudices vanished, and I said to him:

“ ‘Perhaps, Sir, we can arrange for this extra coach. Have you inquired the terms?’

“ ‘Oui, Monsieur. Ah, yes, I have ascertain. They will ask four passengers, to New-Haven, with the privilege to take up two more inside, and one on the box, if the same shall offer. But we are only two. I will vera glad pay two; will Monsieur pay the other and make ourselves four.’

“ ‘Oh Sir, I thank you for your generous offer; but I will do much better than that. I will at once take three of the seats; I have a friend and his wife, who have met with a very great loss, in the death of an only child, and they desire to go, to attend her funeral. I therefore cannot promise you pleasant company for a night ride, but it will advance you on your journey, and save us some expense, as I should have taken the extra for us alone, if you had not been present. Upon my own account, and yours too, Sir, I am very glad that we have met. I trust we shall never regret it.’

“ ‘You do me vera much honor, and I shall be eternally oblige. I assure you, Sir, I shall respect the sorrow of your friends, and shall not say much all the night. I will sleep by myself in my corner, just so well as in my bed. When shall we start?’

“ ‘I will ascertain that of the clerk; I suppose, directly.’

“ He told me, as soon as the mail got off; and that we should be in New-Haven for breakfast. We selected such baggage as we desired to carry, and stored the remainder to await our return. In the meantime the ‘regular coach’ rattled away with its heavy load of mail bags and passengers, and then it just occurred to me that Antoine would be on the look-out for that and sorely disappointed when it did not stop. On this account, the half-hour that intervened before the ‘extra’ started seemed to me a painfully long one, and to shorten it I related a few of the distressing casualties which produced the necessity for my friend to make this journey so suddenly.

“ ‘And I too,’ said he, ‘am making mine through a most singular concatenation of events. Perhaps it shall not tire you, by and by, when I shall tell you how vera singular, every thing happen. I had not been so much as one hour from the vessel when I meet you. Now I am so well acquaint as if you were my brother. I shall tell you my little story when we shall have nothing else so much better. Then you shall ask me.’

“I promised him that I certainly should be glad to fill up some of the tedious hours of our journey in that way. In telling it now, I must not attempt to follow him in all his peculiar expressions of our language, which gave his conversation a zest that is not transmissible.

“I had taken him for a very rough specimen, but found to my delight, that he possessed a cultivated mind, and an abundance of information attained by education and travel, and careful study of men and things, met with in his journeyings. I thought how liable we are to be deceived by first impressions, formed from outside appearances of men.

“Just as we were by you and your companion,” said Farnham. “We set you down as a rough specimen; judging from your Indian blanket, 'coon skin cap, long beard, and general appearance. And we looked upon Atwater as rather effeminate, principally, perhaps, because it is so unusual to see a man out here in the woods, with a ring on his finger.’

“And that reminds me that I wish to publish among the Indian traders and all others likely to have intercourse with these red-skins in future, that I will freely give fifty dollars for that ring. It was the wedding ring of the lovely woman whose funeral I was just starting to attend. It was on her finger when she was wrecked, and she took it off a little while before she died and gave it to Althea for her husband, with a request that he would always wear it; and if ever wedded again, that he should give its counterpart to his new wife; but while he wore the original, she hoped he would never forget the one that he had lost. Do you remember its curious form? The ring was a twisted rope, passing through the ring of an anchor, which embraced and held as a shield two clasped hands and two hearts. Upon the inside were the letters L. L. It must be easily recognized, if ever seen again by a white man; it is so unlike any other, except the one left at home. There can be no mistake in the identity of this one. So much for the ring; now I will continue my story about the stage ride.

“Antoine heard the coach approaching, hurried to the gate by the road to be ready, with his wife and a small trunk, and turned a moment to answer a question of the house-maid, and when he looked around, the four horses were tearing by at a rapid pace, and he was almost ready to faint with fatigue, disappointment and want of sleep, having been quite unable to sleep the night before, from the excitement and anxiety about his daughter, and a vague apprehension of disaster, at the very time that she was suffering and dying upon the wreck.

“The interval that elapsed, between the passing of the regular coach, and the arrival of the extra, was almost unendurable, as it was quite unaccountable. There he was obliged to wait, as he dared not leave home to make inquiries after me, and I dared not leave the stage office, for fear the driver might fail to find the place readily; beside, I wanted to expedite the starting.

“At length, however, we got off, with the promise that we should reach New-Haven on ‘regular time,’ at 9 o'clock in the morning, the distance being counted eighty miles. The relief to poor Antoine, when we drove up and stopped at his gate, can hardly be imagined, nor the thankfulness of his wife, to find that we had a coach to ourselves, with the exception of the stranger whom I briefly mentioned having met with.

“Antoine and wife took the back seat, and the Mexican and I the front, and all settled down, each in his corner, comfortably for the night; and I soon had the satisfaction of knowing that Antoine had forgotten his sufferings, and I judged that his wife, too, was enjoying the same comfortable rest.

“Notwithstanding the determination of the Mexican to sleep, he found it impossible. The moon was bright, and the passing views were too enchanting—one, as we crossed Harlem River, in the second hour of our ride, was particularly lovely. Until our companions were evidently sleeping, we were silent. At length he said, speaking low:

“ ‘I cannot keep myself not to look the beautiful picture. Ah, I promised that I should tell you. It was a picture—one painting that brought me here. I am one artist. I paint the pictures myself. I shall see some scene everywhere that I shall not forget. I have seen very many in Mexico. You think I am one Mexican. Oh no, you are mistaken very much. I am from la belle France. I have been more than twenty years in Mexico. Now I shall go home to see the place where I was born.’

“Of course, I manifested some little surprise, that he should be so far out of his way, if he had started from Vera Cruz for France.

“‘Shall I tell you, then, my little story. Oui? Tres bien! it shall serve to fill up the time until we get sleepy. I left Vera Cruz in June, in a French vessel. I did expect long since to have been in France. It was not the will of the good God. He shall direct me. We had not been ten days at sea, when we met one of those terrible tornadoes that sweep over the West Indies, at times, with such fury, it shall blow the hair from your head. It was one very grand picture for me, but it was bad for the ship. I made a most beautiful sketch in the storm, just at the time our masts were all blown into the sea. I did not know I should ever live to paint it, because the captain say, ‘we are all going to the bottom.’ Vera well; I shall carry my sketch in my hand. But I did not. I have got it in my trunk.

“‘When the masts were gone, we could not go to France. We had no sails, except some very petite ones that the sailors put up when the wind no more blow. So we were very many days out of sight of land, and did not much go any way. In August, we reached Trinidad de Cuba. Here I was compelled to wait several weeks, before I could get a passage around to Havana, because it was the season of the yellow fever there, and that nearly puts a stop to all intercourse.

“‘The vessel that I came in was condemned at Trinidad as unworthy of repairs, and no other was about to sail for France. So I went out into the mountains, to gratify my favorite taste for sketching scenery.

“‘But I could not work at my business to any satisfaction, because I was under restraint. I had not come here of my own will. Beside, I was anxious to reach France, where I had left a father and mother, and a younger brother, whom I had not heard from in so many, many years.

“‘I did not at first write, because, I said to myself, they did not approve of my going to Mexico. My brother wanted me to go to the United States. I would not. I said, they are too poor there to buy pictures. I was mistaken. I did not know. I thought the country was peopled with savages, what you call Indians. Vera well. So I go to Mexico, and I say, I will not write, until I have accumulated some money. I will say I am rich. At length, I write to my brother. No answer. I write again next year. No answer. Then I address a letter to my father. He tells me, Your brother has gone to America. He is coming again next Winter to visit us, myself and your old mother. Come you at the same time. Ah ha! mon père. I shall not wait for the Winter. I shall go at once. And so I did; but I am not yet in France. I am here with you. I shall tell you why.

“‘In the mountain, one day, I met with one young gentleman who was so much fond of looking at the pictures that I make. He could see them much better in my portfolio, in the shade of the cool veranda, than he could where I found them in the mountains. But he was one pleasant companion, and I show him all my pictures, except those which were in my boxes in the custom-house.

“‘And so we had many pleasant days together, and I told him how I happened to be there and how anxious I was to get away. To this he makes answer: I shall accommodate you. I am from Charleston, South Carolina. My name is Legare, and I expect my father's vessel here every day, and you shall return with me, and from there you can get a passage to France, quite easily.

“‘Ah! it was vera easy, certainment. But mon ami, you shall see I did not go to France. I am here in the coach; I am going to Hartford. I am going to look for the place where one picture was made that I saw at the Legares' in Charleston. One vera grand painting of what you call the landscape. It has the color of every leaf, and the water, the rocks and one fine sunset. It was this picture that has brought me so far out of my way. It is curious. Shall I tell you. Oui? Vera well.

“‘When I was in the mountains of la Trinidad, Legare say to me: I think you must be the artist of one picture in my father's house. It is so like this sketch. Did you ever paint in New-York. It was purchase there by my grandfather, at a great price, for my mother. She is dead, and the artist's name is forgotten. My father does not remember. He does not much care for pictures. He would better remember the pedigree of a horse. You shall go with me and see this grand painting. It was of a scene near Hartford, Connecticut, familiar to my mother. It is very much valued in our family. It is beyond all price. You shall see it, and then you shall esteem the man who could paint such a picture.

“‘So I did. You shall think so, when I tell you it is him that I am going to see. I was fascinated with his picture; but that was not what stopped me from going to France. It was not because I wanted to go to Hartford to see the place where the artist found the scene he had so well painted. It was grand. I went many time to look at it. I did better like it every time. I said, I would be proud to say I painted it. The artist had the grand inspiration.

“‘I said, is there not one little bill of the price, that you can find the artist's name. I would vera much like to write him in my book.

“‘No, there was no billet—the story of the purchase was quite remarkable, and there was a duplicate for his aunt, but the artist—the man who had created this grand picture—who cared for him? He was forgotten. Ah, mon ami, so shall be you and I—forgotten. While I live, I shall remember this night. So will you. Then we shall forget.

“‘Ah! I shall forget my story. It is not all told. I have some curious things to tell you yet about that picture, and how it turned me out of my way. I shall now proceed. You are not tired?’

“I assured him that I never was more interested in my life; and this was true. I wish I could give you his narrative in his words and peculiar French style, but I cannot. It was that, probably, that gave it such a charm. I will, however, give the substance. He said:

“‘I had engaged my passage to France, and was to go on board the next morning. That night an alarm of fire was sounded, and I thought, now perhaps I shall make one little sketch for a picture; so I left my hotel, to look at the fire. Horror! It was the house of my friends, the Legares.

“‘It was fortunate for me that I had resisted young Legare's pressing invitation to go home with him and stay all the time, which was some weeks, that I was waiting for a ship; or else my sketches and clothes would have been all lost, and perhaps all my money, which was mostly in bills on France, and kept in my trunk.

“‘My first thought was about the beautiful picture, and I ran into the burning house and up the stairs, already on fire, to rescue a treasure that could never be replaced. You can rebuild a house, but a good painting once lost, is lost forever. Perhaps the artist himself, if again upon the scene, could never reproduce one like the original; because a painter works by inspiration, and that is a thing of the moment. It can not be recalled at pleasure. He may lay on color after color, but still it will be only colored canvas. If the spirit of the artist stirs him, he may make a picture, ever to be admired, with nothing but a crayon and scrap of paper.

“‘The people cried out in the wildest alarm as I went up the stairs, that I should lose my life, but I paid no heed. The spirit of my craft moved me. There were several beautiful paintings in the same room, but my mind was upon one only—the one that I had thought of, talked of and dreamed of, day after day. It was that one that I intended to save. It was the one, the author of which I had so much desired to know. It was the one of which my friend had said, no money can buy it—it is beyond price—it was my mother's! Ah! his mother's! It shall be saved, I said. But how? You shall hear.

“‘It was hung by a strong cord high up the wall. I mounted a small step-ladder, knife in hand, to cut the cord. It was two feet above my reach. The picture hung where it could be plainly seen by the people on the outside, looking through the window, as the light was shining upon it brightly. It had never looked so glorious as it did at that moment, and I would have risked my life much more in the cause of art to save it.

“‘With that resolution strong upon me, I did not heed the shouts of the people to come down, but I sprang from the stand and caught upon the upper edge of the ponderous gilt frame, making a stroke with my knife at the cord, at the same time, which severed quickly under the extra strain of my whole weight, and came down with a crash, just at the instant that a much greater crash came overhead. A portion of the roof had fallen, and I was nearly buried in the plaster of the ceiling that its fall brought down.

“‘I heard the cry outside: He is lost! the stairway is all in flames. Instantly I dragged the picture out of the debris of plaster, toward the window, through which I had planned to escape before I ascended the stairs. I saw in a moment that I could not get the frame through that opening, and I had lost my knife in the fall.

“‘What was I to do? The fire was already dropping through the cracks overhead. That was my fortune. In the glimmer of the falling coals, I saw the bright blade of my knife, and darted across the room, picked it up, and in less than one minute had cut the canvas from its frame, and hastily rolling it together, I drove the sash of the window out with one blow of a chair, and jumped into the top of a large fig tree, while the air seemed alive with the shouts of those who had witnessed the feats of one whom they termed daring—reckless.

“‘Young Legare was profuse of his commendations and thanks, because the picture had been a great favorite with his mother, and as a keep-sake gift from her, he valued it above all the others in the house.

“‘By his permission, I took it with me to my room at the hotel, to see if it was injured in any way, and if so, I should try to repair it before I should sail.

“‘I opened and spread it out upon my bed and found it entirely perfect. As I rolled it up again and was about to lay it away for the owner, who was to call in the morning, I noticed some writing on the back of the canvas. In one corner I read Hartford, Ct., 178—and some part of another figure, which I had cut off. At any rate it was somewhere between 1780 and 1790, that it was painted. Ah ha, I thought, now shall I find by whom? I shall see. But I could not find any name. I feared that I had cut it off and now it was lost forever. I looked very close at those words, written by a fine brush. It was the artist's own hand. I said, those letters have a familiar look. But it is impossible. They are only of the same style; the artist is a Frenchman. That is why Legare thought the style like mine. Then I made one little sigh and said I shall never know; I shall see it never again. Then I make one grand discovery. I see some more writing on the other corner. It was the artist's name. Oh, I have found him. It was the name of my own brother. It was no wonder that the form of the writing appeared familiar. I read it over and over until my eyes filled with tears. Then I thought, I did not risk too much at the fire. To make myself sure that I was not dreaming, I read the name aloud. Then I spelled it over letter by letter: A-n-t-o-i-n-e L-e-c-a-n-d-r-é.

“It was my time now for surprise. Fortunately, I possessed presence of mind enough to suppress all appearance of the astonishment that I felt. I was glad to hear by Antoine's breathing that he still slept. So I kept still and speculated upon the grand denouement that was to take place, when daylight enabled the brothers to recognize each other. In the meantime my Mexican friend continued his story. he said:

“‘I slept but little that night. I determined to abandon my voyage to France and go to New-York. I consulted a map, and found that Hartford could not be over 150 miles beyond that city. True, a long time had elapsed, probably over twenty years, and my dear brother might be dead, or removed; but surely I should find some one who could tell me of an artist of such celebrity. I thought, too, Providence has guided me so far by a series of most mysterious events, in the path toward this brother, and I will not now mistrust its guidance. And I ran over in my mind the sequence of these events.

“‘First, it was almost by a miracle that I had left the City of Mexico on a certain day, and that I reached Vera Cruz only an hour before the Genet sailed. I was urged by friends to wait a week for another, and better ship; but I was impelled to go on board of this. Then, when the storm occurred, instead of repining, I was cheerful, because I felt an assurance of ultimate safety and a prosperous termination of my voyage.

“‘That storm caused us to make a port. What led us to Trinidad, instead of any one of twenty others on the same coast, or in Jamaica, or some other island? Then the delay there drove me to the mountains, where I met Legare. I should have met him at no other place and under no other circumstances, and if I had not, I certainly never should have gone to Charleston; and but for that fire, I never should have seen the back of that picture.

“‘Do you think it was a love of art that drove me into that burning house and up that stairway at the risk of my life? Yes, but there must have been a Providence in all this that should not be carelessly overlooked. It was because I believed in that, that I gave up my engagement for a passage direct to France and took the first one that offered to New-York, where I arrived in barely time to meet you at the stage office. I am yet to learn what that has to do with this singular chain of strange things already met with; something, I am sure. I hope we shall not part until it is fully developed.'

“I did not say, but I thought: We certainly shall not; and then I shall see if your philosophy is capable of astonishment.

“After a while it was evident that the Mexican, as I called him, was asleep, and then I observed that Mrs. Lecandré was not. She perceived by the moonlight that I was awake, and leaned over toward me and said in a low tone: ‘Wonderful, is it not? I have not been asleep; I have heard every word. It sounds like some romance. How do you intend to make the discovery?'

“I told her that ‘we would let things take their course. We will watch after daylight, if there is any recognition.'

“From that time on, I think we all had our turns at sleeping; as the roads were passably good, and the coach was easy, and comfortably warm. At the change of horses, we generally roused up, and sometimes got out, but the stops were very short, as we had got up with the mail coach, and our drivers were not only disposed to keep up, but some of the stages we ran ahead. At the change, however, the mail was always first served, as that always took precedence of extras.

“In the morning, Mrs. Lecandré and I watched the two brothers. Antoine had waked quite refreshed, and for a man under such a weight of grief, seemed cheerful; and, as he spoke to me and said ‘Good morning, Daniel,' I noticed the other open his eyes, as though just waking, and look around to see who spoke.

“‘Evidently,' I said to myself, ‘he thinks that he has been dreaming and has heard a familiar tone.'

“Antoine stared at him a moment, and then shrugged his shoulders, as much as to say: ‘I wonder where Daniel picked up that brigand?'

“His wife noticed the motion, and looked an intelligent smile at me. It said: ‘Antoine is not disposed to make the stranger's acquaintance.'

“The latter was quite too well bred to offer to make any advances toward conversation; beside, he respected the grief of these two parents, and thought silence the best way of showing his respect. So we rode on without conversation until we reached the stage house in New-Haven, where we were to have an hour for breakfast, and, probably. then take our seats in the regular coach for Hartford, still nearly forty miles distant.

“There was a large company at breakfast, and our party was separated; Antoine sitting upon one side alone, and his wife and I opposite, and the other brother a little further along. By and by Mrs. Lecandré whispered me that something annoyed her husband. I soon discovered that it was the constant gaze of the stranger. Of course, I guessed the cause. Something tending toward recognition was working in his mind.

“When the breakfast was nearly over, Mrs. Lecandré, having occasion to address her husband, said, without thought of what effect it might produce: ‘Antoine,' and he instantly answered: ‘Oui, Madame,' and that was followed with ‘Sacre Dieu!' from the Mexican, and a general commotion about the table; the people not knowing whether it was an exclamation of anger or surprise; particularly as the brigandish looking stranger jumped up hastily, and ran around toward Antoine, as though he had some belligerent purpose in view. The excitement was hightened by my movement: for to be ready in any emergency, I hastened around the other way, followed by Mrs. Lecandré.

"Antoine, seeing that he was the person aimed at, arose from his chair and stood the picture of astonishment, as his brother came toward him with outstretched arms, exclaiming:

"'Mon frere, Mon frere. Antoine I am Guilbert. Mon Dieu, Mon dieu!"

"And thus he fell upon his neck and kissed him over and over, in the most affectionate—almost frantic manner.

"Antoine was almost overcome to think this stranger, who had vexed him so with his staring, should prove to be that brother whom he had long since given up as dead. Quitting the embrace of his brother, for that of his wife, he wept like a child, and she shed tears and smiles at the same time, while telling him that she had known all for some hours, but thought it far better for him to sleep and let the recognition take place afterward.

"Guilbert, after quitting his brother, was almost equally demonstrative to me, repeating his thanks over and over, for bringing him along upon this journey.

"The commotion, excitement and curiosity, among the lookers-on of this scene, was very natural, and, as soon as I could extricate myself and retire with them to another room, I related briefly some of the leading circumstances which elicited a very warm sympathy for the bereaved parents.

"I then went to the office to ascertain how we were to proceed. We were booked for Hartford, but had paid for one extra coach only to New-Haven. Under the circumstances, I was anxious to go on in the same way, but found the disposition of the bookkeeper was to crowd us into the mail coach with nine inside, and three outside passengers, and the stage proprietor would not put on an extra without double fare. I said, 'I will consult my companions and let you know in five minutes.' As I turned to do so, I was accosted by a rather rough, though hearty, honest looking man, who spoke with a nasal twang that was not at all prepossessing, and made me impatient to shake him off, as I supposed he merely wanted to ask some idle question about what he had seen or heard of my companions. I mention this merely to show how we may mistake our real friends, through prejudice. However, I could not get away from the fellow, unless at the loss of the button he had seized, to hold me while he spoke.

"'I say, mister, you don't want to go to Hartford. That's fifteen miles right out of your way, and right back again, if you want to go to Glastenbury. You ought to stop at Berlin and go straight across.'

"I felt impatient at this unasked-for advice. I knew the geography of the country pretty well, and knew that so far he was correct. But then there was no stage route, by which I could cut off this distance, and I did not like to trust to the doubtful possibility of getting a team at Berlin; and delay would be fatal. I had calculated all the chances before we started. I was pretty certain that the corpse would be detained at Abel's place one day, and consequently would move for his father's house this very morning, some twenty miles distant, and thirty or thirty-five in our advance, by the shortest route; and I also calculated that the funeral would take place the next day, at furthest, and, therefore, we *must* get there this day; and I believed, although round about, that we could do it by stage by way of Hartford; and, therefore, answered the man holding me by the button, I suppose, a little impatiently, but it did not affect his imperturbation, nor cause him to relinquish his hold.

"'Waall neow,' said the tiresome fellow, 'don't git out 'o sorts, I know what you want. I can see it slick as ile. You're mighty impatient; I see that. Waal, you jist order the extra to Berlin, if you don't like to go in the regular, and trust me—Tyler Kingsbury, that's my name—for the balance.'

"I cannot tell you why it was, but I felt an instantaneous impulse to trust Mr. Tyler Kingsbury, whom I had never seen nor heard of before, and toward whom, not one minute since I had felt such a strong prejudice, that I was sorely tempted to knock him down to get rid of his impertinence; and I said, 'I will do it, Sir.'

"'Will you?' said he, 'you are the man for me. Got some of your old grandfather Atwater's blood in you. Prompt as death.'

"'But, I replied, 'my name is not Atwater.'

"'Oh yes. I knows that. But you'd better tell the man about the extra. We'll talk the other matter over afterwards. I'm going on in the stage. I shall take care that Bill Rains gets in fifteen minutes ahead of you, and then I'll have time to fix things.'

"'Stage is ready,' sung out the driver at the door, and I said to my button-holding friend: 'I rely upon you,' and ordered the stage for Berlin, in the full confidence that I should meet him there, and that the journey would terminate favorably.

"When I related the adventure to my friends, as we drove away, Antoine and wife were nervous with alarm, for fear we should be left without any means of prosecuting our journey; but Guilbert was entirely confident that this was another of the wonderful interpositions of Providence, which had continued with him at every step of his journey from Mexico.

"The first few miles out of New-Haven the roads are very sandy, and we dragged rather slowly; but after we changed horses at Hollingford, we rattled off so fast, that the mail was frequently in sight. I was, I must own, a little anxious to get in as soon as it did, so that if I should not see Mr. Tyler Kingsbury, we could secure seats, and go to Hartford. But I soon found that that mysterious personage was 'taking care of Bill Rains,' that he should get in 'fifteen minutes ahead,' and I resigned myself to fortune. Antoine was nervous. Guilbert was jubilant. Mrs. Lecandré was calm and said she 'hoped it was all right.'

"And so it was. For when we drove up, there sat Mr. Tyler Kingsbury, upon the front seat of a comfortable old family-top-wagon, to which was attached a powerful pair of gray horses, champing their bits with anxiety to be off.

"'Waal,' said he, 'you see that I am all right. I hadn't time to explain things. Beside, I like to meet with men who will take an honest man's word, when he speaks the truth. I knew the only trouble would be about baggage. If you'd happened to have each of you a trunk, I should have been taken rather aback; but as there is but one, it will just fit under the front seat, and the other things will go under the back one, and you'll find that right comfortable for three, particularly as they aint very big, and you and I will ride forward. I rather think you'll like to see how my grays will stir the dust, after their two days' rest. Let me see, its one o'clock now. I'll be over the river at three, if they don't boggle at the ferry. We'll rest half an hour there, and get a bite of something, and at six o'clock I'll set you down at Deacon Atwater's big stone doorstep, or spoil the best pair of horses in Connecticut.'

"I expressed some surprise that he should know so well who and what we were and what we wanted.

"'Oh waal, after we get a little of the fire out of the grays, so that I sha'n't have to keep my eye skinned all the time, I'll tell you all about it. Whoa now, bully boys; can't you take it easy up hill. 'Cause you have got mor'n thirty miles to do this afternoon, beside the ferry.'

"During this talk of our new friend to his horses, Guilbert reached forward and whispered to me, as he saw how the grays were tearing along: 'Learn to trust Providence.'

"As we did not meet with any 'boggle at the ferry,' we were over rather ahead of time, and stopped a little while, as our driver said, to 'let 'em blow,' while we got a hastily prepared lunch, out of the remnants of a country tavern dinner, and then we went off, 'as fresh as ever.'

"I had ascertained at 'The Landing,' as the place was called, that the movement of the funeral party had taken place just as I had calculated and was now about six or seven hours ahead, but it would move slowly while we were likely to keep up a rattling pace, except up and down the long hills which intervene between the Connecticut and the waters that fall into the Sound through the Thames.

"When we struck the first long hill, Tyler Kingsbury and I jumped out to walk.

"'Now,' said he, 'I will tell you how I knew you, or rather the father and mother of the poor girl. My daughter Jane and her went to school together, and I brought 'em both over to our house to spend a week, at one of the vacations. It was Jane that stood up with her when she was married. Perhaps you may remember her. That Leveretta was a proper nice girl; I think one of the smartest and prettiest, my Jane not excepted; and she's right good looking; that I ever seed in my life. Lord bless you, I knew her mother 'fore ever she saw her husband; but I thought I wouldn't tell her who I was, now she is in such a peck of trouble. And I know all about your folks. Your mother used to claim some sort of kin with mine. Fact is I don't live but about five miles from the old Atwater place. We shall go right by. 'Spec the grays won't go so well 'tother side, 'case they'll want to stop and go to the barn. I'll give 'em a drink at the old well—they like that better'n any other water, and then we'll go it again. Don't think 'twill hurt 'em any. I took over a heavier load—had three on with me, all weightier folks than your company. When I got to Berlin, I saw Bill Rains—he used to live with me—and Bill said, jump on the box and run down to New-Haven and see Dick—that's my son—and let the grays rest a bit. So I did, and I am mighty thankful, I am. It comes 'zactly right for me, 'case I b'lieve I owed the old Deacon a good turn. He'll never forget this. I shall hear of it every time I see him. He'll say it was a special interposition of Providence. You know he is great on the interposition subject. Waal, fact is, it does look sorter like it; 'cause if it hadn't been for that singular affair between the brothers, I never should a noticed you, I 'spose; for I had been to breakfast and I should a been on the box with Bill directly, and never seen you nor them. I had started out, and was then going by the dining-room door when I saw such a jumping up and running, that I thought somebody had got a bone down wrongwise, and I run in with the rest. Waal, you see, I comprehended the whole thing, soon as I heard you talk, and I said to myself, there's work for the grays. These folks want to get over to the Deacon's to the funeral, and I'm going to take 'em there. That's just it, 'zactly. Whoa, now, silver-tail. We're top of the hill, and there's a good long run down toward Hop River. Let's jump in again.'

"Sad as were the thoughts of the Lecandrés, several scenes in this ride over Bolton Mountain attracted the eye of the artists, and served for a time, as they pointed out beautiful views to each other, to relieve their minds of that one corroding sorrow.

"By and by the horses, as their owner expressed it, began to 'put out;' that is, to press forward with more vigor, when they struck into the road they were accustomed to travel every week to meeting, and to mill between times. Pretty soon, as we rounded a turn of the road, they caught sight of an old-fashioned, red farm-house and barn, and with a whinny of satisfaction at their arrival home, they rushed in at the open gate and stopped of their own accord at the great front door step.

"'You see,' said the proprietor, 'that my horses know home, and would bring me right to this spot if I was asleep. Now, if you'll all get out and go in and rest fifteen minutes, and get a mug of cider and some apples, and may be our folks can put in a doughnut or a piece of pumpkin pie, and then I think that I can put you down at the Deacon's in just forty minutes. That will make it six o'clock; the very time I promised. I like to keep my engagements. Ah, here comes Jane. Eh, darling. All well? Is your mother about? Do you know these people, daughter?'

"'Some of them, Sir.' And she burst into a flood of tears as she took Mrs. Lecandré in her arms, to kiss her. She had heard the sad news, and her heart was full. The hearse and its followers had passed by only two hours before, and the news of whom it contained had proved a sad shock; so much so that the girl could not instantly recover her composure. But the mother, a calm, quiet woman, came and took the company in and pressed them to eat and drink, and would have urged us all to stay over night, under any other circumstances.

"The halt was a little longer than we expected, and when we went out, we learned the cause. The two grays had been taken off and a pair of sorrel mares were in their place.

"'My brother Richard,' said Tyler, as that individual handed him the reins. 'Jump in Dick; you'll drive your own horses, and I'll tell Mr. Scott about it, as we go along. Waal, fact is, Dick said that I had warmed up the grays right smart, and as 'twas ten miles over and back, he thought it was rather crowding a free team, and as his horses stood then with the harness on, it was only to unhitch mine and put his to, and he would go along and be company for me coming back; and one of the boys could run over to his house and tell the folks where he'd gone. It was right clever'n Dick; but I think the grays would a done it easy enough. Howsomever, as he says, they'll have to go over to-morrow, and perhaps it's best to let 'em go to the stable, as they had lotted on it mightily. Dick's mares are as good as steel, but not quite equal to the grays.'

"'Of course not;' said Dick, 'who ever knew any body's horses quite equal to mine. I 'spose Tyler could sell his pair for twenty pounds more than I could, and the two pairs cost the same when we bought 'em, and have done about the same amount of work. He is a little prouder of his than I am of mine, and they are a handsome pair on the road, I own. But how on't on t'other hand? I've got three pair of colts, and in two years more, the oldest pair will outsell his grays. That's just the difference between a showy pair of geldings, and a pair of working mares. Go ahead, beauties; we are going to the pond, not after wood. There, that's it; take the left hand, and show your heels.'

"So they did, and shortening the road by the quick pace of the horses, and the instructive conversation of the brothers, we reached the old homestead of the Atwater family much sooner and easier than I expected, and less than twenty-one hours from New-York. The family were rejoiced, though amazed to see us; for they had discussed the matter in all its bearings, and had come to the conclusion that it was utterly impossible for Lecandré to receive the information in time to start and get there before the next night, and it was settled that the burial could not be deferred. That Antoine and wife had both come, and with them two friends, whom no one could have expected by any possible stretch of imagination, formed an almost unending theme of conversation; and as soon as the commotion of the arrival was over, I had to sit down and detail all the curious and fortunate circumstances connected with the journey, not omitting the part that Tyler Kingsbury and his brother had performed.

"I ought not to dismiss those noble specimens of good men without mentioning, that no argument that I could use would induce either of them to accept a cent of compensation.

"My uncle, in his conversation, and in his evening prayer, dwelt upon the wonderful interposition of Providence, that had enabled the members of this bereaved family to be gathered here this night under the same roof.

"'Thy wonders, Oh Lord, will never cease,' he repeated with a spirit of touching devotion and trust in the God whom he worshiped and sought to honor.

"After supper I excited still further surprise, by repeating the leading features of Guilbert's story, and the singular chain of incidents that had led him along, step by step, until we met almost in the same minute in Baker's tavern in Wall street. As I saw that it pleased my uncle, I did not forget to state that I was so little prepossessed with Guilbert's outlandish appearance, that I was on the point of turning away and not speaking to him, when I was influenced to do so by some involuntary movement of the mind, over which I had no control.

"My uncle then took up in review and presented to the company, in a most impressive manner, every incident of the history I have related, and showed how God had wrought the links of this chain and cast them down from Heaven, for us to put together on earth, to teach us the wisdom and power that rules over every action of man.

"'If,' said he, 'we had read this story, which Daniel has related to us this evening, we should have considered it mere romance. Now it comes home to us, palpable to our understanding; and I hope this sad affliction, that we have suffered, and perhaps repined at, will be sanctified to our good; as it will be if it teaches us the truth of an overruling Power, and that His love to us is so great, that while He afflicts with one hand He lifts us up with the other. Without His direct interposition these two brothers could not have been united; and it was a part of the great plan, that my much loved child should be removed from earth, at that particular juncture, and that my nephew should arrive in New-York at the exact moment, to enable us all to meet here to-night, to honor the memory, while we mourn the loss, of one who is doubtless now watching over us, among the angelic host above.'

"There was another thing that tended to make my uncle rejoice over the presence of Leveretta's parents. Abel had been almost distracted at the thought of being obliged to consign her to the earth before their arrival, and he had purposely made the time as long as possible, in the faint hope that they might arrive. Now that they had come, and come by such a remarkable sequence of events, it seemed to lift from his mind a killing weight of grief, and give him a comparative degree of cheerfulness; or at least enable him to acquiesce in this decree of Providence. I hope his present wife, or widow, may be as well able to bear the news of her loss. If she really knew that her husband was dead, it would be far easier for her to endure, than it will now, living as she must in a dreadful uncertainty; not knowing that he will not some day appear to her as unexpectedly and as mysteriously, as Guilbert Lecandré did to his brother at the breakfast table in New-Haven.

"But I am wandering from my subject. However, the remainder of the story is soon told, as it will be with all of us in the same way, unless we are spirited off as my cousin has been and thus cheated out of Christian burial.

"These solemn rites, which are all that we can at last bestow upon our friends, were given Leveretta, upon one of those mild, tranquil, balmy Sabbath days, so common to our Autumn in New-England. As I before hinted about a certain date being singularly connected with whatever concerned Abel Atwater, I want you to observe that this event, and one other, of which I may speak yet, if I do not tire you out with the little details of my long story, occurred upon the seventh day of November.

"It has always seemed strange to me, how the news of a death, and time of a funeral, circulates in a country neighborhood, without any concerted action. But it does, and in this case had spread over a circle of ten or twelve miles' diameter, and it appeared to me had brought out a portion of every family, and in many cases every one, old and young.

"It had been arranged to hold a morning service at the old meeting-house, and two hours later bring up the body, according to custom, and place it in the broad aisle, while the funeral sermon was delivered. Parson Williams seeing the vast crowd, and that it was every moment increasing, beckoned my uncle up to the pulpit while the last hymn was being sung, and whispered a few words with him, and then got up to pronounce the benediction; but before doing it, he called for particular attention to what he had to say.

"'It has pleased Him who giveth, and who taketh away, to transplant from this vale of earth, to the gardens of His paradise, one of our most lovely flowers; and it has become our sad duty to consign all that remains on earth, to the silent grave, to await the calling of that lifeless clay again into life, in its own proper form, at that great day:

When limb shall fly to meet its kindred limb;

and for which event we should all be prepared.

"'I perceive that the assemblage of people to join in the rites of this solemn occasion, is vastly greater than can find room in this house, and as our kind Father has granted us a lovely day, I have proposed to hold the service at Deacon Atwater's house; or rather, in his large front yard, standing myself upon the great door-step. I particularly request Captain Wilder to select a dozen young men, and go down and arrange some seats with the boards and shingle blocks which he will find at the north of the house. The service will commence two hours from now, precisely. In the meantime the coffin will be brought out and placed under the great butternut tree, where everybody can have an opportunity of looking upon that face, smiling in death; smiling because she died without a sigh or murmur; smiling because she had a trust and hope in Heaven, where her soul is now at rest. Although only in the beginning of life—a life of joyful comfort and happiness, she parted with it free of all repining, because she was prepared to die. As we look upon her face, and dwell upon the sad circumstances of her death, let us all resolve to imitate her virtues, and be like her prepared to die. The congregation will now be dismissed.'

"I shall not preach over again Parson Williams' sermon; I shall only give you a few closing words.

"'Shall we rejoice, or shall we regret that our mourning is of no real duration? I mean, that mourning which springs from the very sources of life; which is so much a part of our lost dear ones, that it cannot be severed from them, but is ever consecrated to their image, until we reach that bourne which they have already reached. It may be, indeed, that the hearts of good men are thus consecrated; but even they do not keep the first real sorrow. Why should they? It would be a sorrowful world if they did. As time wears on we find that other and different images have thronged in; and we end by experiencing the perishableness of all earthly things, even our grief. And this I would impress upon you all, whether the immediate friends, acquaintances, or strangers to her whose face you have now looked upon for the last time. I have seen more tears to-day, than ever before upon a similar occasion. I constrain you now to dry your eyes, in the consolation of a blessed translation of her for whom you weep, to a brighter sphere. But let not these tears be shed in vain. Let them wash out sin and purify your lives, and fit you to remember the perishableness of all earthly things.'"

"And now," said Scott, "I think I may as well close my story about my lost friend. I fear it has been tediously long already."

"Oh no, no; let us hear how the second marriage occurred; and we want to know something more about Jock Bushnell and lots of things."

"Really, then, gentlemen, we shall have to continue another evening. Perhaps two, if you get all the particulars."

## CHAPTER XX.

### What varied scenes are here, on river, land, and sea.

When the camp was again made, Scott found that instead of having tired out the patience of his listeners, they were more anxious than ever that he should continue his story. Indeed, a good story-teller in camp is as highly valued by a company like Scott's associates, as a village newspaper or circulating library. Many of them had been accustomed to such things at home. Besides, they had become interested in his narrative. They found him, as the miners say, "a rich placer," which they were determined to work as long as time permitted; and this was, perhaps, the last evening that they would be together. All the arrangements of camping and supper were hurried forward to give "the great story-teller" a chance to begin. He found, too, that his audience increased in numbers every evening. It is no wonder, for everybody who had become acquainted with Atwater or his history, felt as much interested as though he had been a personal acquaintance. All had, at least, heard of his singular disappearance from the battlefield. His early griefs, too, enlisted sympathy, and the history of others connected with him excited curiosity. And the historical narrative that Scott had given night after night, was received with such universal favor, that he had no alternative but to continue. "He need not fear tiring their patience," they said, "with particulars, nor with accounts of other characters, which were intimately connected with the lost hero of the battle-field." So after supper and other preliminaries were over, and the pros and cons had been discussed, Scott said:

"Well, gentlemen, since you will have me, I will try once more; but I hardly know where to begin. I did intend to tell you something about the pretty spot where we laid away our early-faded, but sweet summer rose, on a hill that looks down upon that charming sheet of water, but I think I will let the dead rest and return to the history of the living.

"It was necessary for me to make my visit as short as possible, and I only awaited word from Nathan Atwater, who had returned immediately to the landing, to tell me when a vessel would be ready for New-York. That word came at the end of almost a week from the time I left the city, and I hastened my departure, as time with me was now of great importance.

"Antoine and wife had gone to spend a few days with her family, probably for a final visit, for he had determined to accompany his brother at once to France. Guilbert was quite as anxious as I was to return, having left his boxes on board the vessel without any orders where they were to be sent, though he was assured that if the vessel was unloaded in his absence, his goods would be sent to the custom-house.

"We two, therefore, departed together. We made a point to stop at Tyler Kingsbury's and express our thanks to him once more, for which we received a good hearty 'God bless you, gentlemen,' and a mug of cider and pockets full of apples.

"And wasn't that the grandest funeral that ever was seen in these parts. And such a sermon! Tell you what it is, gentlemen, every tear shed that day, and there were enough to make a right smart shower, was worth more to this town than so many pearls and diamonds would have been. I believe I've been a better man ever since. I wouldn't have missed that funeral for one of my greys. Why, my wife and Susan have been talking about it, or singing some of those hymns ever since. That kind of preaching is what I call religion. It makes us good, and happy too, notwithstanding it was at a funeral.

"'Well, you must go, eh? I'm sorry you're in a hurry, for I should like to hear you talk about it all day. Good-by, then, and a safe journey.'

"You will notice that we had not said a word 'about it,' the subject that so occupied this good man's mind; but we had listened to him and that was equally gratifying.

"We reached the landing early that evening and spent the night, as we intended, at my cousin's house, now desolate and lonely, for its beautiful bright light was extinguished forever.

"Abel declared that he could not remain there, and had already proposed to his brother to buy him out, with a view to accept a proposition that I had made to him to accompany me to the West. The only thing that stood in the way was leaving his child. But his friends thought it would be to his advantage to do that, as it seemed like opening a wound afresh, every time he took the little fellow in his arms.

"Nathan's wife, a quiet, amiable woman, and Althea were both willing to take the task upon themselves to care for the child; and to provide against just such an accident as we have now to mourn, the father made a legal disposition of his son, so as to place him under the guardianship of his brother.

"These preliminaries arranged, it was agreed between Abel and me, that he should accompany Lecandré and wife to New-York, some ten days later, and go with me to the Ohio. Guilbert and I were to go on at once and occupy their house, while I purchased my stock of goods and got ready for a start by the time they arrived.

"I remember that it was the 15th of November that we started down the Connecticut, and it was one of those remarkably sunny days that give Autumn in New-England that aspect of loveliness which is almost enchanting to a foreigner, and to one of artistic tastes, like my companion, a feeling bordering upon ecstacy.

"We went on board the sloop the night before we were to sail, expecting to leave the wharf before morning, but as the wind did not suit till then, the lines were cast off just as the sun shot his first rays up to the tree-tops on the high range of hills east of the river, and shortly after, over to the western hills, while we were in a deep shade on the water.

"I might as well mention that the sloop was the Reindeer; and good Captain Clark, having heard Guilbert express his high admiration of the landscape, called us up to witness the present beautiful exhibition. I was struck with its charms, familiar as I had always been with the scenery of the Connecticut, but I must own that I had never been able to appreciate it as I did now, with an enthusiastic student of nature to point out its beauties; and I fancy that is the case with nearly all of us; we daily pass by the most brilliant pictures in the world without admiring them as we should, if we possessed an educated or natural power of artistic appreciation. This is a kind of instruction that all parents should give their children. It would furnish them an everlasting source of happiness. Through the little teaching that I received from the two Lecandré's, I have had many an hour of soothing enjoyment.

"Some persons are gifted with a natural ability to see beautiful pictures in mountains and woods, in rivers, lakes and hills; and in almost every scene in nature. These make the best landscape painters. Others are gifted in scenes on the sea. The soul of others is poured out upon the canvas in depicting the view of a great battle, or of a fire at night.

"The talent of another is all wrapt up in fruits and flowers. There are many who appear to have no power to combine objects so as to make up beautiful pictures of what is constantly before their eyes. To them the great canvas of nature's wonderful painting is only a flat surface, and for aught they see, or know, or care, it might as well be one dead gray color.

"There are others, whose power to see and appreciate nature's great beauties, appears to lie dormant until called into action by some competent teacher; some ardent admirer of natural scenery, like Guilbert Lecandré. And such a pupil, who had passed scenes without seeing them, was Captain Clark. He had sailed up and down this river from boyhood, and knew every landmark that a sailor should know, and the depth of water in every reach; yet until this day he had never known that it shores were hung with a continued succession of charming pictures, any one of which he would have bought at a high price if he had found it ready painted in some great exhibition room, labeled as a 'view on the Rhine,' or some other foreign locality.

"To-day, this old sailor was delighted with views in a home picture-gallery, that never again could be closed to his admiring eyes. His artist passenger had opened them to see what they had often looked at before without appreciation.

"It was rather late for the highest effect produced by the varied tints of Autumn leaves, though many of them were still brilliant, and where they had fallen from the trees, it opened up other scenes of beauty. The farm-houses showed more plainly beyond some forest screen, or behind some orchard, which still held a portion of its fruit, while great piles of apples were seen near many a creaking cider-mill. The grass had lost some of the vividness of its summer green, but to compensate for that, we saw numerous stacks, surrounded by flocks and herds, that gave great richness to the picture. Some hillsides, too, were dotted all over with shocks of corn, while the ground fairly glistened like gold in the sunlight, it was so covered over with yellow pumpkins. At other places, we could see stacks of this fruit piled up near the house or barn, as large as our vessel, while on the other side of the fence, cattle and swine were fatting upon this rich food—staple product of a New-England farm.

"Almost all the accessories of the landscape were new to Guilbert, and delighted him as much as his remarks did those who heard them, while he constantly sketched and pointed out scenes which an artist might admire or copy.

"All day, bathed in this rich November sunshine, we drifted along amid such delightful scenery, made more attractive by the instructive conversation of my friend. I commend to your particular attention some of these pleasant views, if you ever have the opportunity of sailing down the Connecticut River in a clear day of Autumn.

"In the course of this sail, I asked Captain Clark if he had heard of the invention of Fulton, and what he thought of the new kind of vessels which were to be propelled by fire instead of wind, and how they would affect his interest as a navigator of a vessel that must always depend upon her sails and a favorable breeze. It was then about the time that the subject of propelling boats by steam began to be much discussed, and many people believed it would be accomplished; and there is now certainly some reason for us to think that they were not quite so crazy in their notions as they appeared to Captain Clark, who replied:

"'Yes, I have heard something of it, and many a hearty laugh I have had over the foolish notion. The idea is so ridiculous, to talk about a vessel going up the Connecticut River, against the current, which sometimes runs four miles an hour, and with the wind so dead ahead that I should be obliged to anchor the Reindeer; and yet, so say some of these steam-crazy fellows, who are going to sail with a kettle of hot water, their steamboat will move right along, in spite of wind and current. Was there any thing ever started before, on land or water, half so ridiculous?'

"I replied that I had come to the conclusion, not to ridicule any proposition as preposterous, since I had seen and heard so much about the settlement of the North-Western Territory, as one of the most ridiculous projects ever conceived by man, and I have no doubt this campaign will be denounced as a great waste of life and treasure, in a most utopian scheme, to extend our settlements into this territory, a hundred years in advance of the wants of the people. I know the same thing has been said about pushing settlements forward in Ohio. I made use of some facts in that respect in my conversation with Captain Clark, to show him that what men think most unreasonable and improbable this year, becomes a matter of history next year; and I should not be surprised to find that the case in relation to propelling vessels by steam, against stronger currents than this of the Connecticut River.

"Although I found Captain Clark a man of strong sound sense in every other respect, in this matter of 'stemming the current with a tea-kettle of hot-water,' he was not merely skeptical; he was positively confident that it never would be accomplished in the nineteenth century, and closed the argument with, 'it's no use talking. Let's go back to these pictures on shore, that you gentlemen have taught me how to appreciate.'

"And so we dropped our speculations about steam, and went back to things more tangible to his understanding.

"Nevertheless I could not help thinking that some other great instructor, just as Guilbert had, might yet come along and teach him how to appreciate another great truth that had evidently, to me, dawned upon the world.

"Much that was so familiar to us during this passage, was entirely new, and consequently exciting to Guilbert Lecandré. In our night drive by stage from New-York, he had only moonlight views of the country, and the excitement of the next day and succeeding ones had so absorbed his mind that he had not given it an opportunity to study farm-life and farm scenery. Now his whole soul—the soul of an artist—was devoted to the panorama passing slowly before him as we sailed down the river, and no artist ever saw more beautiful objects in one day, upon which to expend his talents. Every thing in the surroundings of the natural scenes was wonderfully different from any that he had been accustomed to heretofore.

"But why should I dwell so long upon the themes of one of the bright days of my life, except to impress you with the loveliness of the shores of one of our American rivers.

"We left it at last, and sailed out into the Sound, which makes an inland sea upon the Connecticut coast; Long Island standing guard against the billows of the great Atlantic. We had fair winds and pleasant days for our run to New-York, stopping only six hours for a turn of tide at Hell Gate, and in four hours afterward reaching the City and landing at Old Slip.

"Having ensconced ourselves comfortably in Antoine's cottage, out of town, Guilbert went to look after his trunks and boxes, which he found safe in the custom-house, where he concluded to let them remain on storage, until he should be ready to sail, as the mode most convenient and least expensive, merely withdrawing one trunk of apparel and his artist materials and brushes, for he could not be idle and wanted to outline two or three pictures of Connecticut River scenes, while the subject was still vivid in his mind. Such is the spirit of the true artist.

"I labored steadily, day after day, in getting my purchases ready, and moving them forward as rapidly as possible, to make up for the unexpected delay caused by the great catastrophe that had overwhelmed us all with such deep grief. By the time I had completed this work, Antoine and wife and Abel arrived, and with them a letter from Althea, with two enclosures, which, if I read to you, will elucidate a part of my story better than I could do it in my own words. The first was from Jonathan Bushnell. Here it is:

"SAG HARBOR, L. I., NOV. 19, 1807.

"MISS ALTHEA ATWATER: Your letter emboldens me to say, my dear Althea, for such, God willing, you shall ever be to me, whether I ever see you again or not. And if not, your letter will always be one of my treasures; a talisman to keep me from harm; a token to remind me of one that I love, and whose memory shall ever keep me from falling into temptations to do evil, or stray from the paths of peace. The thought shall ever be present, as I look upon this treasured token, of what Solomon says: That 'a virtuous woman is far above rubies.' The thought of her 'shall do me good, all the days of her life.' 'She openeth her mouth with wisdom,' is verily applicable to what you have written. How it will delight my mother and make her happy while her much loved son is away. I shall send her a copy—the original I shall never part with—and I shall return to you, if I live, a better man than now, and every way more worthy to be the husband of 'a virtuous woman.'

"I expect to sail day after to-morrow, if we do not have any more ill luck. I do not know that I ought to speak of the occurrence that I had in mind as ill luck, since it turned out so good. You are aware, perhaps, that we are quite out of season, and ought to have been off full three months ago. The ship came in late, and the necessary repairs have delayed her till this period, in spite of all the exertions of owners. Your great misfortune made one more day's delay, but oh, how thankful I am for the joy it has brought me. Then we have had a couple of days' detention here from a very remarkable accident, but that is again in my favor, for it has brought me your letter and opportunity to answer it, though I have to do it at a time when I hope you are calmly sleeping.

"As you have intimated that you will read any little matters that I may write about the voyage, I will give you the first incident.

"When I arrived I found the ship 'all ready for sea,' so the owners said, but still lacking one or two hands, who had engaged, beside those I brought over. I am happy to tell you that one of these is your good friend Jim Baker, who has determined by a sort of intuition, which is fully confirmed by bringing your letter from the post-office, that you and I are engaged, and on your account he has established himself as my special protector. I think I might have a worse one. I shall take him for my boatsteerer, and of course we shall share our dangers together. We already have done so once.

"I found that it would be almost impossible to get the hands to believe that we were going to sea, while the ship lay at the wharf, and as Captain Fordham had gone home to complete his preparations for a three years' absence, leaving the ship in my charge, I concluded to take her over to the outer bay, and hold her at anchor until the men were all ready for sea.

"It was very mild the morning that we went out, and although short-handed, we had no difficulty in reaching our anchorage. I then came ashore with a boats' crew, leaving the ship in charge of the third mate and six hands, the second mate and balance of the crew being ashore, on leave of absence until the next day. I got back to the wharf about 11 o'clock, intending to load two boats with small stores and men's chests, and return long before night. I felt a little proud at being complimented by the owners for the expeditious and sailor-like way that I had taken the ship out, and was conducting operations to get everything ready for sea next day.

"I certainly did work very hard, and was so busy that I did not even think of dinner, until we were all ready to go off about 3 o'clock. I then stepped into the tavern to get a bite, which I had not more than half finished when Jim showed his woolly head at the door, with a most anxious expression of face, tone and manner, that started me to my feet before he spoke. My idea was some trouble among the men, whom I had forbidden to leave the boats, for fear they would get too much rum.

" 'What is it Jim ? Are they getting drunk ?'

" 'No, massa Jock, not dat; de men am all right. But dar am trouble on de ship. Black squall out there.'

" I did not wait to finish my lunch, but sprang at three jumps to the piazza, from which the ship was in full view ten minutes before. Now she was not in sight. I feared that she had been struck instantly to the bottom. I looked again where Jim pointed, and found that she had dragged her anchor nearly three miles, and one of the owners, whom I met as I ran toward the wharf, told me that he had watched with his glass and seen the men let go both of the other anchors without any advantage, and he thought by the rate she was drifting that the Hecla would be a wreck in less than one hour.

" 'What can we do, Mr. Bushnell ?' he said, in tones that showed his deep anxiety.

" I will board her, I replied calmly, but sufficiently firm to show that I meant what I said.

" 'I think that is impossible, hazardous to life certainly; and I had rather lose the ship than see you take such a risk. Look at the bay, sir; I never saw anything to match it before.'

" But the men on board, sir, may perish, if the ship grounds, as they have no boat except those stowed on deck. I *must* go on board. It is my duty. Ho, for a boat's crew ! Who will go with me ?

" Every one of my men came forward, and some twenty volunteers from the crowd that had already gathered upon the wharf.

" Thank you, brave men, I replied. I want eight of the best oarsmen here. I will place Jim in the bow and I will steer.

" There was a little contention for the honor of risking life in such a cause, but it was soon settled, and I think that I had the best boat's crew that ever pulled an oar. My boats were both loaded, and not serviceable. Indeed they needed immediate care. But I soon had another offered, which lay a little way down the beach. The trouble was to get this afloat through the surf. We could pick it up and bring it back to leeward of the wharf, but that would make a detention of ten or fifteen minutes, and time was precious.

" Just now an event occurred that rendered haste still more important. The ship was making sail. Timson was a man, as I had noticed, of wonderful quick perceptions. He had taken in the whole situation at a glance, and had determined, as soon as he found that he could not stop the drifting, with his anchors, that he would make an effort with his sails; at least, such as he could set with his small crew. So he hastily attached some empty casks for buoys, and slipped his cables, loosed one or two of the head-sails, and found that he had the ship under command of his helm.

" The next question was, what to do ? If he went to sea, and the blow continued, it would be fatal, short-handed as he was. He might run for New-London, but then it would be dark before he could get in, and he did not know the place well enough to run the ship safe ashore, and he had no anchor. There was but one chance to save the ship, and that was to thread the tortuous channel back to the wharf, and if he could not come to it, he could stick her nose into a soft mud bank. Here he knew every foot of ground, and had daylight; but he had one grand difficulty that would have made any man of less force and sharp, quick decision, hesitate until too late. He had got to run the ship almost in the wind's eye, and not to lose a foot of ground to carry her past a certain point, upon that tack, for there was no possibility of making a second one. He took the chances boldly in hand, planted himself with one man at the helm, and placed the others ready to obey the first word instantly, and thus let the loosened greyhound dash forward.

" I stopped a moment to comprehend the situation, and then acted as promptly as Timson had done.

" No one said, the ship is lost—she will strike the point, but a good many thought it, and the owners gave her up as certain to be wrecked. The whole village, men and women, by this time were out watching, as they thought, the doomed ship.

" Captain Brown, one of my volunteer crew, said, ' let us carry out an anchor. If she passes the point she will need one.'

" That 'if' grated upon my ear and I replied, 'she must. If we can reach her before she gets there, she will.'

" The men seized a small anchor and placed it in the boat, and began shoving her off. It was a desperate undertaking. Ten men, five upon each side, waded into the water, carrying the boat as far out as they could hold to the ground, watching a favorable lull of the foaming sea, and then, simultaneously springing on board, each seized an oar and pulled for life, not over, but actually through the wave that rolled in upon us, filling the boat almost to the gunwales. But we were safe afloat, and while one half bailed with buckets, hats and shoes, the others kept her off and under steerage way.

" All this was accomplished in less time than it takes to tell it. We had no time to notice the cry of horror as we went out of sight under the wave, in which it was supposed by those on shore that we were lost.

" The water was still very rough and wind ahead, but oh, how those eight oars did make that boat jump from wave to wave. I have never seen any thing like it, except when towed by a whale, and then it was comparatively calm.

" You may not be aware of the difficulty and great danger of laying a boat along-side and boarding a ship under full headway, in such a wind as this. It was still more difficult in the present case, owing to the ship being so short-handed that it could give us no assistance. There was another danger to us. We were nearing her rapidly; it would soon be 'now or never,' and as yet we had not been seen. It was of no use to shout, for the wind howled like demons, and it blew off the crests of the waves into a thick mist. Could we be seen ? That began to be an anxious question, and I leaned over toward Captain Brown and asked him if he thought any one could see us from the ship.

" 'I hope to God, not,' he replied. 'I fear if we are seen they will try to heave to, for us, and if so, the ship is lost. She won't have the length of this oar to spare.'

" 'There is no danger of any folly on the part of Timson,' I said. 'He has already shown his quality. Shall we risk boarding, sir, at the rate she is going?'

" 'We have not come for play, sir; we must take the chances. If we grapple at the first blow and spring for life, we are safe. If we miss, we shall swamp. That's all.'

" 'Jim,' I said, shouting to him, 'be ready with your boat-hook; our lives depend on you. Strike sure, and hold on, hands and feet, till you are pulled apart. Ah, we are seen. They are preparing for us.'

" This was true. Timson's eye had caught a glimpse of the boat, and read the whole history at a glance. So much for quick perceptions in such emergencies.

" As he dared not call a man from his station, he said to the one with him at the helm, ' I can hold her. Give that boat all the spare lines you can to leeward, and throw down the gang ladders. Bear a hand quicker than lightning.'

" It was this movement that I had seen. The rope ladders at fore and aft gangways came over, and two or three lines trailing from the cat-heads and chains, and not satisfied with that, the man sprang on the main yard and dropped the end of a line from that to the water. I told the men what was going on, and what provision was made for saving them in case of accident to the boat. It undoubtedly braced their nerves, for they responded, ' Aye, aye, Sir,' as though they understood the whole movement. The critical moment had now arrived, when I must round the boat to, and so sharp as not to fall to leeward, and yet with a care not to foul on the ship's stern or pass to windward. That would insure our destruction. I had to look every man fair in the face, while I alone saw the danger. I think that that saved us. I felt the responsibility of the lives of all these men entrusted to me by wives, mothers, sisters and lovers, and I nerved myself to my work. I had to measure distances by the eye, and calculate them to an inch. I could not help feeling a glow of pride as I watched that noble negro fellow bracing himself in the bow for a desperate chance. I had asked Capt. Brown and his fellow oarsman, who pulled the bow oars, to stand by when Jim made his strike and get hold of a line if possible. It was fortunate I did so. I heard the click of Jim's boat-hook, and saw that he had made a sure blow, but the next instant he was lifted out of the boat as though he was a lump of cork. His grip upon the staff could not be broken, and he had held on equally strong with his feet, yet the jerk had drawn his feet right out of his boots. Capt. Brown, however, had got a line and knew how to handle it, and we swung around against the mizen chains with such a sudden crash that the three oars upon that side were broken, like pipe stems, before they could be shipped. I sung out, ' aboard all.' All except Jim were ready. Poor fellow! he had saved us, I feared, to perish himself. He held on for a moment, but the blow of falling against the ship's side, as he fell inboard from the boat, was so severe that it broke his hold, and he dropped into the sea. As he did so he struck one of the lines that Timson had so thoughtfully ordered overboard, and, as he said afterward, ' I used my grabbers.' And so did I mine; for as he floated down, I spoiled a good monkey-jacket for him by the energy of my application of a boat-hook, with which I brought him into the boat, which by this time was full of water, and we two its only occupants, and it was very rapidly settling under us, and was not within reach of the ship, but just then a shower of lines were thrown and instantly secured under our arms, and we were safely drawn on board, only a little bruised. Such duckings sailors are used to and do not mind. Capt. Brown, as soon as he saw we were safe, had the presence of mind to cut the boat loose, which was a drag on the ship, and would alter her course. As he did so, and before I was fairly on board, he said, 'bear a hand, boys; we must get more sail on her.' His promptness was fortunate, for our boarding had caused her to fall off until the point stared the helmsman full in the face.

"After the man left Timson he had found his strength insufficient to hold the helm, and when I reached him, was nearly exhausted. He barely said, as I took hold, 'God bless you, Sir. I think that new sail will save her. I can skin that point close enough to jump ashore.'

"Capt. Brown now came to my assistance at the helm, and I insisted that Timson should take entire command, and that every man on board would obey his every word or motion. This I think we did, and in ten minutes we were past our great danger, close enough, as he said, 'to jump ashore,' and through a most fearful tumble of boiling, foaming water. As we eased off around the point, an involuntary shout broke out simultaneously from every throat on board; and I was told afterward that the same thing occurred at the wharf, where all the villagers were watching us. Their joy was a little dampened, however, from not knowing whether the boat had safely boarded the ship, as some old salts said the thing was impossible.

"Half an hour later they were convinced that the men were all right, and the owners were assured of the safety of the ship, which we stuck into a mud bank about a cable's length from the wharf; and, as we went on at half tide, we shall be able to get off at high water to-morrow morning, and then, if we have good luck in fishing our anchors, we shall be ready for sea with not more than two days' delay from this accident.

"I am pleased to say that the owners, and indeed all the townspeople, have made very hearty expressions of approbation toward Mr. Timson and your friend, which I have endeavored to transfer from myself to others more deserving. Capt. Brown declares that we are all indebted to Jim for our lives, as but for his sure eye and strong arms we should never have got on board, and Timson says if we had not that the chances of losing the ship were a hundred to one against her. So. after all, Jim is the real hero. I think that he has already received not less than a dozen pairs of new boots and jackets in place of those lost in his late battle with the elements.

"Now, my dear Althea, I must really ask your forgiveness for writing you such a long letter about myself and my profession. I own that I have done it because in my long night watch I want employment for the mind, and I am not without hopes that it may interest one for whom I feel a most sincere affection. One who, I hope, will some day consent to own a closer relation with me than now; yet now I feel proud to know that I hold such a place in her mind that she has said, 'I will pray for you daily.' In those prayers, offer thanks for this late escape from 'the perils of the sea.'

"I suppose that I shall not hear from you again, and perhaps I shall not think it necessary to write another letter until I am in blue water. Then I intend to keep a log especially for your use, and whenever opportunity offers, will send you extracts.

"If that cousin is still with you, or should you correspond with him, will you be kind enough to present my highest regards for the interest he has taken in my suit; and for what he has done to move it forward to a favorable termination, may God reward him.

"And now accept the warmest assurances of a loving heart, that I shall hold you constantly in such remembrance, that your image will be ever present to cheer and soothe me in adversity, and to add to my joy when all nature smiles around me. And should I never return, oh, let me die in the full assurance that I was beloved by one every way worthy of the pure affection of an honest man.

"With reiterated assurances of love and fidelity, I am truly your friend, "JONATHAN BUSHNELL."

"The other letter you will easily discover who wrote, by its contents. It was also addressed 'Miss Althea Atwater, South Coventry, Connecticut.' It reads:

"'MY WERY MUCH BELOVED YOUNG LADY: I spose you did not spec a letter from dis child, just now, and 'ticurly from this Sag Arbor, 'case he did'nt know his self dat was comin here. But fact is, I hear a word or two from Miss Susan, which termined me I'd go a long wid Massa Jock, and am mighty glad now as how I did. I is just found out what sort of stuff he is made on, and I tell you Miss Althea he am one of the real old blue hen's chickens. He am just been saving our ship from wreck. Am mighty sure of that, sartin. I think this town would 'lect him Judge if 'twas 'lection time. I am sure he could marry five or six of the prettiest gals in this village, for they have had a raal kissing bee here this evening, when Mister Huntington presented us, that's me and Massa Jock, and our mate, Mr. Timson. as the men who saved the Hecla. I tell you Miss Althea they want satisfied shaking hands with him, as they did with the rest on us, but they put their arms around his neck and kissed him for good, that's sartin, jist as though they meant it. Made me feel mighty much like getting out my pocket hankchef, only I had n't got any, 'case I'd got on one of them new coats. May be Massa Jock will tell you how he pulled my old one off with a boat-hook. I was precious near Davy Jones's locker, that time, sure. Well, may be I'll do him as good a turn as pulling his jacket off with a boat-hook 'fore we've been three year together. I jist want the chance, that's all. I wish you would tell Massa Abel dat I'd never left the old schooner, only I couldn't stand out agin the chance of going 'long of Massa Jock on your account; 'case I is jist going to take good care on him and bring him safe back to you; see if I don't

"'Now good night, Miss Althea. Can't say as I is your lover, but I can say I loves you, and nobody can stop me from saying so, long's I live.

"'That's all you'll hear this time from JIM."

"These letters gave me great satisfaction, and I took time when I ought to have been asleep to copy, before I returned the originals.

"Perhaps I may as well mention here that the Hecla went to sea, without further delay, and after a successful voyage returned last year, when 'Massa Jock' was offered by the same owners a very fine new ship, which they had built during his absence. He thanked them heartily, but told them that he could not think of sailing again in less than three months, and very frankly gave them the reason. Instead of this being an objection, they were highly pleased with the idea, as it would give them time to receive and get ready two other ships, which they would be glad to have sail in company with the 'Montauk.' They did wish him to be present to see to the fitting out of the new ship, and as an inducement, one of the partners gave him a pressing invitation to bring his bride and make his house their home and be as welcome as though in their own.

"It is almost useless to say that he was a welcome guest at the old Atwater farm, and that he found Althea ripened in loveliness by her three years of happy, hopeful loving. The wedding was altogether the most satisfactory that had occurred in that town since our sweet Leveretta was married, and notwithstanding it was the Deacon's daughter, our old friend Jim got out the old fiddle in the Deacon's kitchen, and the servants of that and other families present found it impossible to keep their feet still, but went into a regular Virginia break down, in the midst of which Jim happened to look up and caught the eye of 'Massa Jock,' looking most mischievously happy, with his new wife leaning upon his shoulder, and her father and Parson Williams a little beyond. In short he discovered that the parlors were emptied of their occupants, to see how the inmates of the kitchen enjoyed a real old-fashioned Connecticut wedding.

"'Well, Deacon Atwater,' said the parson, 'after all, I do not see any great sin in people making themselves happy, and if they can do it by the music of a fiddle, I think we may as well go back to our flip and let them alone. I don't think the devil would make much to-night out of that company.'

"This happy wedding over, and the visiting completed, Capt. Bushnell and his wife went to Sag Harbor and spent a delightful Summer, and then he went to sea again, with a promise, if he lives to return, to visit me on the Ohio, and if both he and Althea like it, to leave the stormy ocean for a more quiet home on a Western farm. I fear that this sad loss of her brother may deter Althea, which I shall regret, for such a man as Jonathan Bushnell, is an acquisition to any new country.

"But to proceed with my own narrative. At length the time had arrived which must be no longer deferred, for it was in the last week of November, which may bring snow storms on the Alleghanies, making our journey uncomfortable, beside causing frequent delays. I have never parted from a family with deeper regret than I did with the Lecandré's. They had already made arrangements for their ocean journey, when we started upon ours across the mountains to the richest and most extensive valley in the world. Yes, gentlemen, this great valley of the Mississippi, to which those of the Ohio, Alleghany, Monongahela, Kanawha, Scioto, Muskingum, Miami, Licking, Kentucky, Wabash, etc., are only little garden spots, compared with the whole, will some day contain the most powerful population of any equal area on earth. Powerful, because it has the ability to produce food enough to feed all the rest of the world. I am aware that it is said that it will only be able to feed itself, because it is so isolated from the rest of the world. A few years will make great changes. If we can drive back these red skins, who oppose all cultivation of the soil, you may live to see a population along these rivers sufficient to float down surplus products to New-Orleans enough to build up a great commercial city. And I should not be surprised if there should be, before the end of this century, canals built upon which corn and pork made upon this river, or at least on the Upper Ohio, actually floated to New-York City. I know that these ideas are considered wild, extravagant, preposterous, and I have been subjected to a deal of ridicule for entertaining such extravagances, but I have them, and I am in pretty good company. I am assured that DeWitt Clinton of New-York has the same kind of 'insane notions.'

"I mention this in connection with what I was going to tell you about Abel, and what an effect a ridiculous proposition has upon the human mind. His had been sealed up in misery; from the day he first learned so suddenly of the death of his wife, I had never seen him smile. He ate, drank and slept, and went about mechanically. It was because his health was failing that I had proposed this journey. I tried hard to wake him up in New-York, but in vain. He really loved his wife's mother, but he bid adieu to her without realizing that it was probably forever.

"The route from New-York is by a sloop to South Amboy, and it is one of the most beautiful that you can imagine. The view of the city, Long Island, Staten Island, and the Jersey shore, with a long vista up the Hudson, exceeds anything I ever saw or imagined, but my poor cousin did not see it. All was mist before his eyes. From Amboy to Bordentown, a little over thirty miles, the stage route is through a most desolate region of sandy barrens, scrubby pines, and here and there a poor farm. I would have gladly shut my eyes upon that part of the journey. But from Bordentown down the Delaware, just before sunset, and into a moonlit night, the view was grand beyond parallel.

"Philadelphia, compared with bustling New York, is tame. It wears a quaker hat and coat. I was glad to hurry through it for fear that my stricken friend would buy him a suit and join the sober throng.

"At length we began to climb the Alleghanies, and found it a toilsome work. Here Abel did so far notice things as to speak of the sad misfortune of the great West being divided from the East by such a natural barrier. We had then been several hours continually going up hill, and I acknowlege that it was rather an awkward locality to illustrate such a project, but I began and soon got warmed up about the West, and then expressed my firm belief that the East would some day derive great advantages from the rich products of the West, transported upon a canal.

"Abel looked at me for a moment to be sure that I was sane and in earnest, and then broke out in a laugh that would have honored his most mirthful days of boyhood. The ridiculousness, to his mind, of a canal across the Alleghanies had broken the spell that had enshrouded his whole being, and from that moment nature assumed her sway. He was the same cheerful, companionable being that you knew him, but he never forgot to bore me about my canal over the Alleghany Mountains.

"Now, my friends, since I have taken you through nearly all the phases of my cousin's life, as well as my own, and have fallen from the sublime to the ridiculous, I suppose that we may as well end the story here as any where."

"'Oh, no. Go on, go on. You have not given us his second marriage, and ever so much more that's interesting. We cannot let you off yet.'

"Well, then, I must claim a short furlough, at any rate. You have not given me a chance to take my accustomed pipe. Let us all have a smoke. It will probably remind you that my canal project is of the same character."

## CHAPTER XXI.

She died as pure as when I gave my parting kiss.

"Let me see. Where did I leave off?"

"Why, my dear fellow, you were engaged in that pleasant little job of making water run up hill in a canal across the Alleghanies. I thought you told us that you were born in Connecticut. Wasn't it in Holland where the Dutchmen have 'canal on the brain?'"

This sally was received, as such rude ones usually are by such a company, with shouts of merriment, but Scott, nothing disconcerted, continued:

"Oh you may laugh, perhaps it will do you as much good as it did Abel; it cured him of a serious disease, and it may you, so that you may live to a respectable old age; and if you do not, your children will see the waters of the east and west connected, notwithstanding the Alleghanies are between them. We'll dig them down or bore through. The Yankee Nation will not be shut out of this valley by that little chain of rocks. Beside, who knows what we may find in digging through? What if we should develop fields of coal in Pennsylvania as rich as they are in England? It has already been discovered in that State; I saw specimens of it at Pittsburg. I venture the prophesy that that town, situated as it is upon a point between the two rivers which form the Ohio, will be found some day of no mean importance. The lumber trade alone of the Alleghany River is enough to make one town wealthy, and Pittsburgh will take a large share of the profit.

"The place is now a thriving village. I was surprised to see that old Fort Du Quesne has been allowed to go to decay. It must have been a strong work against Indians, standing as it does right on the very point, surrounded by a deep ditch and high brick walls which cost an immense labor, but it could be easily reduced by heavy guns from the hills.

"I was detained only two days at Pittsburg for my goods, and I was fortunate in finding a keel boat partly loaded, bound for the Kanawha, upon which I shipped my freight and took passage without delay, as I began to dread the chance of being frozen up before we could get down. I have known the river wholly closed some days earlier, and I have known it open and boatable all Winter.

"Our cabin was pretty small, and not quite high enough in the ceiling for a six footer like me, but fortunately the weather, except at night, was altogether such that we could promenade on deck during the day, and I opened one of my great bales of Indian blankets which made us a luxurious bed by night; and a rifle belonging to the Captain I used several times to good advantage upon deer along the bank, and once I brought down a fat young bear, so that our rations never fell short.

"It was the first day of December that we left Pittsburg, and by all the rules of almanac makers, it should have been Winter, but it was far more like the middle of Autumn, it was so clear, calm, and delightful, and the scenery along the river at that time was beautiful, though not as grand as the Connecticut.

"Opposite the town, across the Monongahela, and for a long distance down upon the left hand, the hills slope quite down to the water, showing here and there great black gorges in the rocks and under the immense trees where some stream tumbles down to the river. Across the Alleghany from Pittsburg there is quite an extensive plain and some good farms, but a few miles below I noticed a mass of almost perpendicular rocks so close to the river bank that there is barely room for the stage road, by which alone is there any intercourse with the country below and the adjoining part of Ohio.

"As there was a light skiff attached to the keel-boat, Abel and I had the opportunity of going ashore as often as we pleased, to look at any curiosity or hunt for game, and by taking advantage of long reaches of still water, we could allow the boat to get an hour ahead and still overtake it easily.

"I remember during the first day out that we landed and walked over the place where St. Clair's army had their Winter quarters, which I judge must have been very comfortable from the appearance of the remains of so many warm huts with nice stone fire-places, notwithstanding the great depth of snow which they had during the Winter. The camp was located upon a small stream that afforded good water, and was surrounded with a dense forest that gave them abundant fuel.

"For about thirty miles below Pittsburg, the Ohio runs nearly north-west, through a country not very promising for settlement. Then it takes in Beaver Creek, where the land looks more favorable, and then turns westward, and shortly afterward southward, forming the boundary between Virginia and Ohio, and there it is bounded by a region that will some day—perhaps after my canal is finished—support a dense, prosperous population.

"But enough of speculation about what Ohio will be, or about the delightful trip that we had down the river, the banks of which already begin to develop the capabilities of the land—"

"'And the want of your canal.'

"Yes, that is true, for at present we can send no produce of a weighty character, across the mountains, and it is very expensive getting our supplies. But you may depend upon it that if we cannot carry our produce in wagons to the eastern market, we can send it on foot in the shape of horses, cattle, and hogs, and grow rich at that; and the time will come when the Eastern States will depend upon this great North-Western Territory for their daily food.

"The hundreds of miles of shores that we passed between, now covered with immense trees, will all be cleared off and cultivated. A remark that Abel made about the soil struck me as forcibly true.

"'The poorest of this land,' said he, 'is naturally richer than our manured gardens in Connecticut; and if the richest of it was there we should dig it up and cart it upon our corn-fields for manure.'

"It is utterly improbable that such a soil should lie idle long after it becomes known, even if we have no canal to get the surplus produce away.

"We reached the Kanawha in good time, but full two weeks later than I intended. The consequence was a great deal of hurry and hard work to get my goods on board of light boats to go up the Sciota, which would save a long transportation over land. The season was already so far advanced that we were liable to be frozen up at any moment, but I determined to make the venture, and did so with success. I did not care to take Abel with me for fear that three months in an Indian trading post on the frontier might entirely disgust him with Western life. So I arranged that he should spend most of the time at my father's, making a journey, when the weather suited, to Marietta, to look at the lands I had bought for him, and possibly find others that he would like to buy. My sisters readily undertook the kind office of keeping his mind so engaged that it would not settle back again into the gloom that we at first found would overwhelm him.

"I did not go with my goods, but as soon as I got them started I mounted my horse, crossed the river, and struck off into the wilderness of Ohio, to pick up ten or twelve horses, with which I was to meet my partner, 'at the head of navigation,' wherever that might be, whether it happened at Chillicothe, or the Forks, or the Delaware towns, which was our destination for the boats, in order to bring down the peltry that we might collect at that point. If we succeeded in getting the goods all the way by water, we should not have much use for the horses, except one or two, but the others I knew would sell well to the Indians. And if we should meet ice, then horse-flesh would suffer.

"I think I may set it down as a special favor of Providence and compensation to me for making so many others happy, by my attendance upon that funeral, that I was favored afterward with such magnificent weather, for we took our boats quite to their destination without an hour's delay from ice, cold, or storm.

"I struck the river at Chillicothe, expecting that we should there have to pack the horses, as the river was low, but that very night a rain fell which raised the water sufficient to cross all the shoals, and my men went ahead with their poles and cordelles, singing their jolly boatmen's songs, while performing the most severe labor. Occasionally I was enabled to lighten their toil by the use of a horse, where the nature of the shore would admit.

"I arrived just in the nick of time to find my horses the most ready article of merchandise that I had; as Tecumseh and his brother, this very fellow that we routed out of his nest at Tippecanoe, were organizing a company to attend some grand pow-wow, and they paid me all that my conscience would allow me to ask for all the horses I could spare; and what confirms what we have heard about British influence, every dollar was in old King George's golden sovereigns; and what is more, the red rascals knew their exact value in Federal currency, yet made me count them at five dollars each.

"There was a circumstance connected with this Tecumseh party that gave me a great deal of satisfaction. One of the purchasers of one of my horses—or rather I swapped with him for a small Indian pony, which I intended as a present to my youngest sister—was a Pottowottomie chief, or head man of one of the branches of that tribe, and a fine-looking, middle-aged man he was, with an honest, benevolent countenance—about the best looking Indian face I had ever seen. I took a liking to him at first sight, and I had a special object in giving him an honest trade. I had pursued my inquiries from the first with untiring perseverance to discover the fate of my dear Melli, but ever till now without success.

"I had always been impressed, somehow, with the idea that she was carried off by the Pottowottomies, and that opinion had several times been confirmed by rumors, though they were somewhat vague. I determined to try this Indian, and the first step toward gaining his confidence was in trading horses, in which I took care that he should find every word I said was true. He did so and was delighted, and well he might be, as I could have sold this favorite horse for a great deal more money.

"After I had made the trade I pretended that in keeping my accounts I wanted to set down the name of every one to whom I sold a horse, and where he lived. This I did in hopes of gaining some information that might make it worth my while to pursue the investigation, and if I should ever get into the Pottowottomie country I could inquire by name for this Indian as an old acquaintance.

"I fear that the fellow was too much for me in this respect, for he told me that his name was Meltonewah; but Gen. Harrison says that he has a list of all the names of chiefs in the tribe, and there is none that corresponded with that name.

"This has surprised me not a little, for in everything else the fellow was apparently the soul of candor. When I found that he understood English I got him into my room one evening, in company with one or two other Indians who were old friends of mine, so as not to excite any suspicion on the part of my Pottowottomie acquaintance, and after I had treated them to cakes and coffee, and all but him to whisky—he would not touch it—and had a good smoke, I commenced telling stories, at which you allow I have a faculty, and directly got upon the theme of my early love, and how my girl was carried off, and all I knew of the circumstances. Somehow I thought from the first that Meltonewah was unusually interested, and I watched his stoical countenance for some sign of emotion, which I caught at last by a little fiction of mine; for I related that after the girl reached the Indian country she was married and had a family of children by a Pottowottomie chief.

"That was the trap that caught him, for he directly replied, 'cho-in,' which I instantly remembered was 'no.' I did not pretend to understand the expression, but I noticed the other Indians turned their eyes from me to him, which convinced me that I had a fresh trail. So I grew pathetic and declared I would travel a thousand miles to see Melli once more and shake hands and be friends with her husband, if he had treated her kindly, and if he had not I would make war with him to the bitter end.

"This closed the story, and pretty soon my auditors went off to their wigwams, and I sat pondering how I should follow this new trail, when the door opened softly and Meltonewah entered like a cat and resumed his former seat. He then asked me in pretty good English 'if I was all alone, and that my walls had no ears?' When I had satisfied him upon that point he began his story about 'The White Swan,' as he called her, who he assured me was not alive—was never married—was never sullied by word or deed of an Indian, but was accidentally killed the very night of her arrival by a blow aimed at her wicked father, who had, as I had always suspected, planned her abduction, and they were both buried together in one grave.

"But the thing that most strongly confirmed me in this tale was this: He told me without the least word to lead to it, that this girl had with her, and wore it near her heart, my picture, which he had seen and remembered so well that he recognized my face before I had told half of my story. And that picture, he said, was buried with the girl, prepared, in some way that I did not understand, to preserve it forever.

"I was so agitated by this story that I did not ascertain the location of the grave, but the Indian promised to show it to me if I would go with him to his country. All I know about that country is, that it is between the Wabash and Lake Michigan, so that my chance was slim, unless I could find that single Indian, which now is beyond hope, as we may have them hostile for twenty years.

"When my new friend had finished his story he shook my hand warmly and said good-by, though I expected to see him again in the morning; but I was disappointed, for he was off before light, and I have never seen nor heard of him since; but I have ever believed his story, and to me it has been a great consolation.

"That was the only adventure in the Indian country that Winter that is worth relating to you, or that has any connection with other parts of my story.

"I had a most successful Winter's business, getting a good deal of British gold, and loading my boats with peltry, which I floated safely down to the mouth of the Sciota on the Spring fresh, and from there got them up to the Kanawah by the usual course, and eventually to an eastern market—"

"'By the canal?'

"No, by the old tedious way of keel-boat to Pittsburg, and wagons to Philadelphia, and sloop to New-York, all of which was accomplished in time for repeating the operation of the previous Autumn; but no matter for that.

"My sister was delighted with her pony, but thinking the name of Meltonewah a little too long, she cut off the five last letters, leaving the very pretty name of Melto. And when she got her—for it is a mare—nicely trimmed up and rigged up with her fancy bridle and saddle housings, she certainly had reason to feel proud of the animal's good appearance; as I feel proud of the whole establishment, rider included, when we go out for a canter over the hills to Melli's old home. And that reminds me of just what, and that only, that I intended to tell, and that was how Abel found his second wife.

"He had spent the Winter mostly at my father's, except when absent 'prospecting,' as he called it, for land, and locations for cities yet to be built. My sister Luenda, the one to whom I gave the pony, is a very lively, beautiful and intelligent girl, and she exerted herself to win her cousin away from his gloomy thoughts, and succeeded in a slight degree, though she could never get him to mix with her young company. His heart was buried with his darling wife. She often told him that there was one of her acquaintances who was exactly fitted by nature to take Leveretta's place, and her she hoped to be able to introduce to him before many weeks. She was now absent on a visit beyond the mountains, but would return to her father's with the opening Spring. Her name was Emily Strawn, daughter of the foster-father of the girl to whom I was betrothed. Luenda was an excellent artist to illustrate character, making charming pictures of her friends, but she failed to charm her cousin's mind out of its pre-occupation. He simply said: 'If she is only half as beautiful in face and mind as you paint her, I am sure I shall love her as something beautiful and good, and rejoice that there is another being on earth worthy to be compared to the one I have lost, but I can not worship her. I have worshiped one woman, and with her death the faculty to worship perished with me, I believe, forever.

"When Luenda wrote to me her plans about Abel, and desire to bring Emily and him together, and bespeaking my good offices to favor the project, I became painfully aware of a sentiment in my heart, of which I had not before been conscious. In short, gentlemen, I was jealous, envious, covetous, uncharitable, unchristian-like in my feelings.

"I was twice the age of Emily, and had never manifested any feeling toward her but that of a fatherly sort of friendship. As to matrimony, that, it was well understood, I never thought of; for I had often declared that I never would marry until I had the most satisfactory evidence of the death of Melli.

"I found myself arguing, 'now I have that evidence, and that she died as pure as when I gave her my parting kiss, and had carried my likeness with her to the grave, as close to her heart as she could press it. Just as I am released from my vow of celibacy, and while there is but one woman among all of my acquaintance to whom I would offer my hand, my own sister is plotting to throw her into the arms of another.'

"In my uncharitableness, I fear that I wished the courier who had brought the letter up from Chillicothe, had actually perished, as he came near doing, in a snow storm. I do not think I was ever so wicked before in my life. I found fault with myself for having brought my cousin home with me. I compared it to the fable of the man who warmed the frozen viper in his bosom.

"You see that I was in every particular, about as unreasonable as it is possible for a madman to be; and I went to bed a very unhappy mortal, and all without a particle of cause.

"How fortunate it is for us that good angels watch by our bedsides; and how happy are those whose good Christian mothers have taught them to invoke their holy presence during sleep.

"After tormenting myself for a time with imps of darkness, all at once that hymn of childhood recurred to my mind, in which these words are embodied, and they broke involuntarily from my lips:

> "'Hush my child; lie still and slumber!
> Holy angels guard thy bed;
> Heavenly blessings without number,
> Gently showering on thy head.'

"No antidote of physician ever had such a soothing effect. I did hush all repining and sweetly slumbered. One holy angel hovered over me, and showered the blessings of peace upon my mind. Melli in all her purity and beauty stood beside me, and told me to await God's own time—that He had predestined Emily for my cousin, and me the instrument of bringing them together, and thus in promoting their happiness, I should insure my own; and that she should look down with delight upon our mutual enjoyment, which would be very brief, before death would claim one of the party, through the same agents that had deprived me during life of the company of this angelic being.

"I am aware, and was at the time, that the vision was nothing but a dream; but it produced a remarkable impression upon my mind, which has been a guide to my actions ever since, and enabled me to look upon the recent loss of my friend, as though it was the fulfillment of a prophesy—an event that no human foresight was sufficient to avert.

"When I returned in the Spring, I could not divest my mind of the thought that Emily and Abel were to be married, though neither of them had such an idea. Indeed he had not yet seen her, and seemingly had no desire to that effect.

"At length, however, Luenda received a letter, giving the welcome intelligence that Emily had returned, and urged my sister to make her a visit, and of course, in company with her brother and cousin. Luenda returned an answer that her cousin was absent, up the river, perhaps somewhere in her neighborhood, 'land hunting;' and, as soon as he returned, we would certainly accept the invitation.

"Accordingly the proposition was made after his return that we should go up the next Saturday, and spend the Sabbath; but, owing to some objections from Abel, the trip was deferred, and the proposition renewed for the next week, when it became evident that he was very much disinclined to go at all; and upon Luenda's renewing her bantering about introducing him to Emily, he honestly confessed that that was the reason why he disliked to make the visit.

“ ‘To tell you the honest truth, Luenda,’ he said, ‘which I will do if you will accept it in strict confidence, and promise to assist me, I will tell you that I have met with an adventure which has upset all my philosophy about women. You know that I have felt ever since Leveretta's death more like avoiding than associating with female society, except yours, which I honestly acknowledge has been delightful, and afforded me a great deal of happiness; and I have no doubt an acquaintance with your friend, as you describe her, would have been highly advantageous to me, and that I should have liked her as well as it was possible for me to like any girl. You know that I have thought I never should see another female for whom I could hold in my heart a single spark of affection; but I find that I was mistaken—that I knew nothing of myself—that with all my boasted strength of intellect I have found it so weak that it has become affected by an accidental meeting with a person whose name and residence are both unknown, and who, for aught I know, may be already married or betrothed; or, at least, entirely beyond my reach; if indeed she is not altogether mythical; some elusive hamadryad. Whether mythical or real, the spirit haunts me so that I cannot sleep without dreaming of her; and cannot keep her out of my thoughts while awake. Now, under these circumstances, while in such a state of abstraction of mind, how can I go with you and be introduced to a young lady with whom you have carried on a sort of flirtation about me, and perhaps induced to believe that I shall make some serious proposals to her, leading toward matrimony, if we should both be suited upon full acquaintance. Now do you not think I ought to avoid this meeting?’

“ ‘I really cannot answer this question, without I know more about this matter, and whether or not you are laboring under a sort of hallucination. Come, tell me the whole story, and if you have not been bewitched by some fairy of the mountain, I will assist you; and if you are a subject of enchantment, I shall prescribe a visit to Emily Strawn, as the best of all possible remedies. She, being the greater enchantress, will overpower your mythical one of the mountains. But pray give me the whole adventure.’

“ ‘I fear you are too full of levity, while I am painfully serious. Will you promise not to ridicule?’

“ ‘With all my heart. Forgive me if I seemed not to sympathize. Indeed, I will be serious.’

“ ‘Well, then, this is how it was: Last week, when returning from my trip to Pine-tree Mountain, I took the wrong road, and went, I do not know how far out of my way; several miles, I am sure; and then, thinking to cut across the hills into the other road, I took a bridle path which seemed to lead in the right direction, and followed that two or three miles without seeing sign of habitation or clearing, until I began to think the chance of having to sleep in the woods a little stronger than any other prospect. As I rose over one of the ridges, I discovered signs of meeting a heavy shower, much more certain than I did of finding shelter, or even getting out of the woods. I would have turned back, if there had been any house in that direction; but I had not seen one for more than two hours. So I pushed ahead down the hill, for half a mile or more, the cloud coming toward me rapidly, and looking angry with its constant flashes of lightning and heavy peals of thunder. It was already near night, but the storm produced a premature gloom. When I reached the foot of the hill, the path seemed to lose itself in the bed of a rocky brook, and I did not know which way to go, but decided to turn down the stream, as that would lead me toward the river, which I thought could not be far off, and there I knew that I should find a road.

“ ‘It was fortunate that I so decided, and I was right in my calculation, but I did not very soon reach the road. Forty rods, perhaps, from where I rode into the brook, I came out upon a little plat of about an acre, walled in all around by high ledges, the brook tumbling along one side, through the gates of this, the most secluded spot for a hermit that I ever saw; and by such a one, I believed it was occupied; for here was a garden and corn field, and there against the perpendicular rock, in the most sunny part of the inclosure was a neat little log-cabin, around which were pigs and chickens. As the storm was ready to burst upon me in a minute, I decided at once to ask for shelter, and rode up and called at the door, expecting to see it opened by some old gray-headed negro; or, if not by a negro, by a gaunt-looking white man, in buckskin hunting shirt and moccasins, and accouterments to match.

“ ‘I think if one who I know is in heaven, had suddenly appeared before me in full life, I should not have been more astonished than I was to see, instead of the old hermit that I had expected, a tall, genteel, plain but neatly dressed, handsome young lady, whose manner gave her an air of refinement, and whose tones, which fell upon my ear in contrast with the rolling thunder, were as soft as the strains of the Æolian harp.

“ ‘Dumb as I was with astonishment, it was fortunate that she was too well bred to wait for me to prefer my request, for I think I should have appeared like a fool, if I had attempted to speak at that moment, or else too much surprised to ask for what I wanted. I was still more surprised, when she spoke hurriedly:’

“ ‘Oh, thank heaven, that you have come; for the dear soul is dying, and I here all alone; and such a storm! 'Light, doctor, 'light. You have not a minute to spare. You must wait upon yourself, for uncle Dick has not returned since I sent him for you this morning. There is a shelter for your horse, and, in the little crib by the chimney you will find corn and fodder. Do hurry, if you please, doctor, so as not to get wet.’

“ ‘I did hurry, for the storm was approaching with fearful rapidity, and promised to be extremely severe. I saw that the young lady labored under a mistake, in supposing that I was the doctor that she had sent for. But who was the “dear soul” that was dying, of whom she spoke with such a tone that it indicated some one truly dear to her. Could it be her mother? If so, I mused, “how shall I excuse myself for entering such a sacred presence in a false character?” Still, I thought, “I should only stop an hour or so, until the shower passed over, and perhaps I may as well let the innocent deception remain. If it will be any comfort to the dying, or the mourner, I can act the doctor for the time being.” You know, perhaps, that I read medicine one Winter, with the design of fitting myself for the profession.

“ ‘I thought rapidly and worked in the same way. I found the stable a natural cave in the rock, that had, from appearances, often been used by a horse, for there was the wooden hook, driven in a fissure to hang the saddle and bridle upon; and there was the hollow log feed-trough; and there a hole for the halter. It was indeed a comfortable spot for my horse, and I soon had before him a good feed. I had barely time to hasten into the cabin, to escape the storm—for, as I entered the door, the rain struck the roof on the opposite side, not in drops, nor streams, but in a deluge of water, as though the course of the brook had been lifted up on the hill behind the house, and made to pour a stormy torrent over the precipice. For ten minutes afterward, the roar was so incessant and loud, that my voice would have been drowned, if I had attempted to speak. The atmosphere, too, was so darkened, that I could only see the inmates by the incessant flashes of lightning. These were, a gray-headed old negro woman, upon her deathbed, which, with everything in the room, though plain and scanty, was as neat as your parlor; and the young lady whom I had seen at the door, kneeling by the bedside, holding one of the sufferer's poor bony hands affectionately clasped between her own jeweled fingers, of one hand, while the other rested upon that black forehead, forming a strong contrast, and making up altogether, one of the finest pictures of death and his mourners that I had ever witnessed. My first thought was, “Oh how I wish that Antoine Lecandré was here now to sketch this scene.”

“ ‘My eye took in everything at a glance—the bed and that dark head resting upon a snowy pillow, and that mourner and nurse kneeling by its side—the rough table and stools and water pail and clean gourds—the little shelf of crockery, and the three cooking utensils and a flat-iron upon another shelf—the great stone fire place and its small fire of brands of sugar tree, and the ample store of fuel in one corner—and several garments, both male and female, that hung upon the wall at the foot of the bed, told me that this was the home of man and wife. In her who kneeled by the bedside, I saw the perfect representative of Christian love and charity. Verily she was the visitor of the afflicted, the sick and dying. bringing material and spiritual hope and comfort. Almost involuntarily, I knelt by her side, and bowed my head to Him who rules the storm, and thanked Him sincerely for such angels of mercy as He had sent to minister to this poor, old, dying negro woman, who seemed to be convulsed with fear, as she started and groaned at every bright flash, or unusually loud peal, while her nurse calmly tried to soothe the poor creature's alarm and make her lie quiet.

“‘The great terror of the storm was over in half an hour, but then the rain fell in one steady pour of water, till night closed in and long after; so that it was out of the question for me to think of leaving the place until morning.

“‘After the storm subsided so that words could be heard, the first ones spoken were from the young lady. to tell the patient that “the doctor had come.”

“‘I am berry much tank de good Lord, on your account, missee, 'case it am awful for you here alone. But he cannot help me. I going now, I is; I only been waiting all dis long Winter to see you once more. Am Dick come? Oh he am done gone in dis storm sure. Won't you say that beautiful prayer again, dear good missee angel?'

“‘I discovered from this that the being by my side was an angel by name, as well as character, as I knew that name was common in this part of the State.

“‘She replied by asking her if she would not let the doctor give her some medicine first.

“‘Oh no, de medicine cannot do any good to dis ole body, but de prayer am good for de soul. When I hear your voice and see your face, I shall tink I am already wid de angels in de heaven above.'

“‘I have listened to a great many eloquent prayers, but certainly the one that filled that little cabin with melody and praise, for the next half hour, exceeded any and all that I ever listened to before. Such well chosen words; so fitted to the occasion and condition of the sufferer; expressing such hopeful assurance of her future happiness if she could no longer remain on earth—such thoughtfulness for protection from the perils of the storm—such expressions of gratitude to God for guiding and hastening my steps hither, in time to reach shelter before before being overwhelmed; and thus to save the speaker from the misery of being left alone in the house of death, while the great battle of the elements raged so furiously. Such a combination of petition, thanks and narrative, I never heard put in such small space, in such fitting, well spoken words. I was quite rapt in a delightful ecstacy of devotional worship, and the suffering woman was soothed of all her pain for the time being, and lay so easy that I thought she was asleep. She was not, however, for after the “Amen,” in which all three audibly united, she said: “Now, missee, one little verse of dat hymn, one more time.”

“‘With this request the young lady readily complied, singing:'

“‘Jesus, now I come to thee;
Jesus, now to thee I fly:
Jesus, now so kind to me,
Says my soul shall never die;
Says my soul shall never die;
Says my soul shall never die.'

“‘These words, you may think, were so common, so simple, that they could elicit no melody. Perhaps if I had heard them in any other place, under any other circumstances, I should have been differently affected; but now, in that little log-cabin, by the side of that bed, from which a soul was flying to Jesus, in full confidence it would never die, and while all without was so fearfully stormy, and all within so peaceful, the voice of the singer was the most melodious I had ever heard—more than I had imagined possible except in the region where souls that never die always sing songs of praise.

“‘I was by this time so enchanted, that I almost began to doubt my reason, and to inquire whether I was not the hero of some of the fairy tales that I had read in my youth.

“‘I was awakened from this momentary dream, by a little start and scream from my companion.

“‘The darkness of the atmosphere had given place to one of those slight spells of brightness that we often see in the midst of a storm, and the light streamed in through the one little window of four panes, and fell directly upon the dark face on the pillow.

“‘The first glance told me what had accasioned the start and painful exclamation. The old black slave, was at length proclaimed free. “Jesus, now I come to thee,” had been verified. Stolen from Africa; from parents, friends and home in her youth, and made to serve a taskmaster here, a slave for life, in death was free. Dying peacefully, happily, forgiving all her fellow creatures for all their wrongs to her, and not repining that not one of her long line of children and grand children, were not now at her bedside, but thanking heaven for the boon of having one person present for whom she had “been waiting all Winter.” Waiting for this loved object to come and smoothe her last pillow, and soothe her soul to rest with the music of her celestial voice, and let her old eyes rest upon that beautiful face as the last thing that she saw on earth. I never before conceived the meaning of “a happy death bed.” I never felt such reverential emotions before, in presence of death; not even by my own mother's bedside. as I did in the presence of this old negro slave.

“I could not restrain my tears, nor could I ask my companion to restrain hers. She bent her head down upon the bed, and I think finally sobbed herself asleep, as she remained in the same position till long after dark, when she arose as calm and almost as fresh in look as though nothing unusual had occurred.

“In the meantime I had stirred up the fire and added fuel, and sat down by its cheerful blaze to meditate upon things past and present. The rain still continued, but the thunder and lightning had ceased, and in their place was the incessant roar of that mountain stream, tearing down its rocky bed along this singular hermit's valley, which looks as if it had once been a mountain lakelet, bounded all around by perpendicular walls, before the stream wore through the barrier at the lower side of the inclosure.

“At length my companion in this enchanted abode got up and came forward, saying. ‘Forgive me, Sir, for neglecting you so long; but poor old aunt Sophy! I did love her so much, and her death was so unexpected, that I could not hide my grief. I did not know that she was sick until I came over this morning, and this termination of her life is therefore quite unexpected. I did not even tell uncle Dick that there was any great need of haste. But, oh, dear, I never can be thankful enough to heaven for sending you at the time you arrived. Else I should have been here all alone. Is it not a fearful storm? But amid it all how calmly the poor old soul passed away.'

“I suggested that her quiet, easy death, without a struggle, was owing to the soothing effect of the song.”

“Do you think so, doctor. I have been thinking that I had, perhaps, hastened her end; that in the effort to join me, she had lost her breath.”

“No,” I replied, “nothing could have prolonged it many minutes. I saw as soon as I entered that her hours were numbered, and whatever would aid her to pass away in peace was merciful. I am sure that your presence and voice were more soothing than anything that could have been offered, and that no medical skill, if it had been at hand in the morning, could have prolonged her life till another morning.”

“Oh, thank you, sir, for that opinion. I believe you are right; but still, if I had been alone, I never should have felt easy; as the thought would have obtruded itself upon my mind, that something, perhaps, might have been done. But now, as we can do nothing for the dead, we must think of the living.

I believe we have a pail of water that I fetched in just before you arrived, as I know I talked of making a cup of tea, and I brought from home a loaf of light bread and some butter, intending to make Aunt Sophy some soft toast, but, poor soul, she could not take it, and I presume that neither you nor I have eaten since breakfast. If you will step up on that stool and hand me down a ham that you will find over that hole in the loft floor, I will see what I can do toward providing us a little supper. I am sure that uncle Dick has a store of eggs, and I think it more than likely that he has some potatoes under the cabin floor. I know that he has plenty in the cave, but it is too stormy and dark to try to get any of them to-night. I hope we shall do very well upon what we have."

"I replied that I was certain of it; and begged her not to try to get any more than the bread and butter and tea; but she, a true woman, determined not to stop at anything short of the best that she could do, and with a little of my assistance, she soon had an excellent supper spread upon a clean white piece of domestic linen on the little table, which was none too big for such a cosey supper for two.

"I will not attempt to rehash our conversation, but hers showed refinement and education, with a good knowledge of current events and literature, and ready words for conversation upon any subject.

"You are aware, Luenda, that I consider you a very handsome girl, and you need not think that I disparage my previous opinion, when I tell you that this one is more beautiful than yourself. You know how I worshiped the beauty of my dear Leveretta, and that she was really beautiful; and so is this girl, and although of a different style of face from yours and Leveretta's, it is equally attractive. There is a stronger, calmer, more fixed expression in her features, and, I suppose, owing to the situation, a somewhat melancholy look, which gives her face a very different appearance from yours. You may think me unobserving of particulars, but I really cannot tell you the color of her eyes. I only know they were bright, mild, intelligent. Her hair I observed more closely, because it was the exact color of my sister Althea's—a beautiful light brown. She was dressed tastefully and fittingly for the four mile walk that she had taken over the hills. She was a trifle taller than you; finely formed, elastic, and well proportioned, and all her movements were extremely graceful.

"After the supper was cleared away, she went to work as though well accustomed to it, to prepare the body in readiness for its coffin. By the time this was accomplished it was past midnight, and she was doubtless pretty tired, for soon after she got herself seated in an easy position, in aunt Sophy's old rocking-chair, she fell into a quiet dose, which must have lasted a couple of hours, and would I hoped continue till daylight. But we were not yet done with the fearful scenes of this night.

"I had noticed for some time that the roar of the brook had ceased, and wondered why, as the rain had not. I was made aware of the reason in a most painful manner, while the one I watched still slept.

"I was first startled by the neighing of my horse. Then I heard the pigs squeal as they often do when disturbed in their nest. I wondered what could be the cause. Finally I ceased to hear the rain, and looking across the room to the window, I saw that the moon was shining. Then I thought it glistened rather curiously upon the floor, but looking more carefully, I discovered it was not the light of the moon that I saw, but water, and as I looked it spread wider and wider over the cracks.

"What could it mean. I had noticed that the cabin stood upon the highest part of the little plain, and therefore it could not be that the rain water had settled under the floor and risen above it; yet there it was palpably before my eyes. I could not be mistaken. I listened attentively. All the elements were stilled as though never in commotion. No rain falling; no wind stirring; no thunder pealing; no bright flashes; no roar of running water.

"Hark. I hear a sound. It is the rats under the floor. They are swimming and crying out in fear. Again, there is a sound outside. Some animal is paddling in water. My horse calls again. I got up and walked gently across the room, and as I did so the water gushed up between the loose boards. I opened the door and looked out upon a calm moon-lit lake, filling the valley from wall to wall; all around, nothing but water. It was then about knee deep in the stable, and that was what had alarmed the horse. I stepped out quickly and put the saddle and bridle upon him and led him close to the door and fastened his halter to an old horse-shoe that was nailed upon the door post. I thought that he would probably have to swim for life and bear upon his back a precious burden. The cool air from the door had awakened the sleeper, and she saw the horse as I came in, and spoke in alarm at the prospect of my leaving her.

"I assured her that I certainly should not go alone, but that we should probably need the horse and all of her fortitude.

"I then took her by the hand and led her to the door, expecting to see her greatly alarmed, but she was not, and stood gazing at the beauty of the scene, with evident delight, and after a minute or two said, confidently, 'Do not be alarmed, sir; I have heard of this before. I do not think the water will rise higher.'"

"'In this, however, she was mistaken, for it continued to rise rapidly, and I consulted her as to the means of escape, and the cause of the overflow."

"'The cause is the drift wood that has floated down the creek and jammed in a narrow gorge below and formed a dam, but I have been told that the water could not rise up to the house before it would flow over a low place in the wall. I think that also must have been gorged. As to escape, if the water continues to rise, I fear we shall find it next to impossible. The only road into the glen is up or down the creek. There is a foot-path, by which I came, on the opposite side of the stream, but not accessible to the horse, and of course now beyond our reach.'

"'I assured her of the swimming abilities of the horse, and urged her to allow me to make the attempt to land her upon the foot path, the situation of which she had pointed out, but she peremptorily declined, with these words:

"'What, and leave you to perish! Never, never. I could not live afterward.'

"By this time the water was a foot deep on the floor and rising fast. I took a new survey of the situation and saw a means of escape.

"The cabin stood about ten or fifteen feet from the rocks, which were about ten feet higher than its roof, which was made in the usual manner of poles and shakes. If I had strength enough to raise a couple of these poles, with one end on the house and the other against the rocks, I could bridge over the space, and thus we could both reach dry land. This project I determined to try at once. So I went inside and communicated the information to my companion in misery and danger. I found her mounted upon the table and looking sadly at the bed, dreading to see that submerged. I read the look instantly and acted. I placed a stool under each bed post, which would secure the corpse from wet longer than we could remain in the room. Then I mounted to the loft and made a hole through the roof, and commenced my operation of building a bridge to the rocks. Before I had completed it, but as soon as I found that I should be successful, I descended and assisted the lady up the same way, and gave her a seat on the roof, where she enjoyed the beauty of the scene, as far as any one could enjoy it under such circumstances.

"Finding we should not use the horse, I climbed down and loosened him, and he immediately made his way to the top of the cave cellar, where the pigs had already found an Ararat. Then I completed my bridge, and was about to try it, when we were hailed by a voice from the rock near the other end of the bridge.

"'Oh, Lord, a bressa God, a mighty good Lord, amen; tanks be to heaven, dear missee, is dat you alive, for sartin, or am it your ghost?'

"'Yes, uncle Dick, it is I, and all safe, and soon coming ashore.'

"'An the ole woman?——'

"'She is gone, uncle Dick; not drowned, but died calmly in her bed, singing praises.'

"'Oh, bress God for dat, alway bress his name, an you missee, for be so good as stay wid poor ole nigger woman. I tank you; I tank you; I tank you ebber more. You is de bressed angel.'

"'Now, uncle Dick, can we climb the rocks when we get across the bridge?'

"'Well, I spec him mighty bad, missee, an so slippery and muddy, I reckon you better stay right dare, and I will come to you. Case, you see him water am falling now. I is bin two three hour work on de dam, and it am broke fore I come round here. He all run out in a hour. Dat am our new doctor 'spose wid you. Mighty glad on your 'count, missee, dat he wid you dis dreful night. Dare, don't you see de water am going. 'Spec he spoil all my taters, though. Dat ole hen am setting by de side of chimney, wonder where am she. Pig, he know enough to take care o' hisself. Well, tank de Lord for all him mercy. But I did work hard, missee, to break that dam. Now guess I will try de doctor's bridge.'

"And then he scrambled down the rocks, up which I had intended to climb, holding by the bushes, and down the boards and poles that I had laid for our safe passage away from this scene of danger.'

"'Why, uncle Dick, how wet you are. Have you been out all night in the rain?'

"'Oh, no, missee; in mighty good place under de rock by de big pine, all de time he rain so, fas asleep. I got in de drink prying out dem log so dis water run off. He going now mighty quick. I 'spec he out ob house by dis time. Reckon I go down and see how he am. Must try if my tinder am dry. Sure dis ole nigger aint, and would like to see de fire once more.'

"So down he scrambled, and directly we heard the click of flint and steel, and in a very short time, by the aid of one of the dry boards of the loft floor, which he split into kindlings, he had got a fire started that was soon roaring through the maple wood, which had not been long enough in water to become saturated, and it was not many minutes before the half drowned cabin began to assume an air of comfort not at all unwelcome to any of its occupants.

"When the old man had thus provided for the comfort of his young mistress, he paid a fitting attention to his life-long partner, though he said he could not mourn her departure, because he knew she had gone where the souls of white folks were the same color as the souls of the good black people, and where there is no Slavery.

"He was exceedingly grateful to me for my thoughtfulness and care in putting the bed up 'so as to keep the good old soul out of the water,' and the expressions of his gratitude to his young mistress were marked by the usual extravagance of his race, but full of sincerity and pure affection.

"As it was now daylight, and the water all subsided. I determined to proceed. I urged the young lady to accept my horse to ride home, but she firmly declined, saying that she was sure some of 'our people would be over before sun-up,' and, therefore, she could not accept my offer, for which she was exceedingly grateful; but she would thank me, if I did not meet any one coming this way, to stop at the first house down the creek and tell them what had occurred here; and so we parted. Parted, I am sorry to say, without having undeceived the lady about my being 'the new doctor,' and without learning anything by which I can ever trace her, except, as I suppose, her name is Angell."

"'But,' said Luenda, 'you can go back to uncle Dick's cabin and inquire. I am sure he will be glad to see you and give you all the information you wish.'

"To tell you the truth, I was so abstracted for hours after I left, that I do not think I could find my way back to save my life. I only know that I met a party, white and black, very soon after I left the cabin, who made the most earnest and hurried inquiries about what had happened there, and then pushed on before I could ask a single question. And now I have thought about the adventure until I am positively uncomfortable. I do feel a deep anxiety to see that woman once more, but I do not believe I ever shall. I asked Daniel if there was a family up that way by the name of Angell, and what sort of folks they were, and he replied, 'Oh, yes, Jack Angell, wild as Indians. Did you see them? Girls twelve or fifteen years old, who never had but one garment at a time, and that a coarse shirt, hardly down to the knees.' Think of that, Luenda; what a bucket of cold water upon further inquiries after my angel. What shall I do cousin? I honestly own that I shall be unhappy if I do not see that lady again.

"'Well, I do not perceive what can be done, since you thought so little of it at the time, as not only not to make any inquiry, but really to obliterate all traces by which you could find her again. I must advise you, therefore, to give up this fairy dream and go with me and see my friend Emily. I am sure you will like her as well as you do that vision of a night.'

"Indeed, cousin Lu, you may well call it the 'vision of a night,' and although it troubled me no more at the time than any other vision, I have not been able since to 'lay the ghost.' It haunts me day and night. Sometimes I am the poor old negro slave, upon my death bed, with that angel of mercy hovering around and ministering to my necessities. Sometimes——"

Here Scott was interrupted by the entrance of an officer from headquarters, who handed him a note, which he read, and then said to his auditors, who appeared to have become deeply interested in his story at this point—"and sometimes we are all doomed to disappointment. Yours is not to hear the conclusion of this story to-night. I am summoned to headquarters."

"Oh, thunder! and so we shall not hear it all, as this is the last night. Is the order peremptory?"

"No, it is only a request for a little consultation, the result of which I think will be, if I report my company of volunteers contented to remain, that we shall not break camp to-morrow, because the officers in charge of that duty have not been able, in the hurry and confusion of our march, to make out complete returns of killed, wounded, missing, fit for duty, and present condition of the men, and the General is unwilling to discharge any part of them until this business is completed perfectly, and the only chance to do it is to halt one day. What say you; as I am to report, are you all agreed?"

"Yes, yes, yes, agreed, agreed. And we will have plenty of time for the remainder of the story. Hurrah for a halt and a good wash-up before we enter town. It's all right. Now go ahead."

## CHAPTER XXII.

**Here natural scenes are well portrayed, and wondrous wild they are**

"'Sometimes'—that was where I left off abruptly last night. Now let me see if I can resume my work at the broken thread. I suppose you remember I was telling you what Abel said to my sister about the effect which that remarkable interview with 'a vision of the night,' as Luenda called it, had produced upon his mind. The feeling of dissatisfaction grew stronger and stronger with him, as it became more and more certain that the person who had thus affected his peace of mind was beyond his reach. He had at first, undoubtedly, been interested with the character of this young lady, as developed under most trying circumstances. He could not help being pleased with her personal appearance, because she was truly beautiful: and it is contrary to nature for a man not to admire a beautiful woman. Yet I believe this man only intended to admire for the moment, and as soon as he passed out of the presence of the object of his admiration to forget it, or at least not to think of her with any desire to renew the acquaintance. That was why he lost the trail so easily.

"God often thwarts what man designs. Abel found it utterly impossible to shake off the thoughts that constantly reverted to old Dick's cabin, and to the vision that now haunted him like an uneasy dream. When he thought he could cure his malady with another interview, he was tormented with a sense of the folly and misanthropy by which he had shut himself out of all opportunity. He would have tried to follow his route back, but he was really so abstracted that morning, that he had seen nothing, and knew no object to inquire for; not having paid the least attention to course nor distance. During his ride home, he only inquired for 'Scott's store,' and rode ahead as directed. Indeed, his horse would have brought him home, but it would not take him back. From the time he missed his way, returning from Pine Tree Mountain, his head had been all wrong as to the points of compass, and therefore he was completely adrift, and if he had undertaken to retrace his steps, would have been just as likely to take the wrong as the right course.

"If he had consulted me, I could have set him right, for I knew the location of old Dick's cabin, as well as I knew the way to bed.

"My answer about the Angell family completely dampened his ardor about asking me any more questions; therefore, he had recourse to my sister. I will now renew the narrative from the breach last night.

"'Sometimes I am swimming my horse across rivers, with that ever present form clinging to me, and just as I am about to land her upon some safe spot, I find that instead of the living and lovely young lady whom I would have borne from the inundated cabin, I have the corpse of the old negro woman in my arms.

"'Another time, I dream of being seated in pleasant conversation with that 'vision of a night,' and directly after I find that we are on the roof of the cabin, floating down a rapid stream, out of the danger of which I have no power to rescue my companion, though I would willingly sacrifice my own life to save hers.

"'Then again I seem to be upon the rocks, while she and uncle Dick float by upon the stormy wave, and are lost to my view, and I fancy have sunk into the water never to rise again.

"'These are some of the horrors of my sleep, from which I gladly awake, although fancy then runs riot; constantly interweaving that one being with my existence.

"'In vain I try to calmly reason with myself. In this case there is no reason, and I have no power to exorcise the ghost that haunts me. I think my mind has never recovered the shock it received from Leveretta's death. For months her image was constantly present. Now a new one has taken its place, though sometimes they come together, Leveretta leading the new form and placing it by my side and then vanishing herself. I verily believe I shall go crazy, if I do not soon obtain some relief. What shall I do?'

"'Just what I have advised you: mix more with company and not allow yourself a moment of solitude. Instead of shunning, as you have tried to do, all female society, court it and make its pleasures minister to your disordered mind. Go with me to see Emily, and let something real drive the phantom from your memory.'

"Oh do not ask me to do that. Though I am so much troubled, I can not bear to think that I never shall see that blessed christian again. I know it is almost hopeless, yet I do hope. I can see now how foolishly I acted that night. I thought that I had power to control nature, and would not allow myself to think of her only as a stranger whom I never should meet, nor care to meet again. Therefore, I permitted her to deceive herself as to my identity, and in doing so thought to forget it myself. This is why I made no inquiries about herself or home; which any well-bred man would have done, and ask for permission to see her again, under more favorable circumstances. I have no doubt she supposes that I knew who she was, and is now thinking that I am decidedly ill-bred, not to call and inquire after her health, and pay such respects to her as polite usage actually requires. This view of the case constantly torments me; for to tell you the truth, I do really wish to stand in view of that lady in a favorable light. I cannot bear to have her think me a boor, and incapable of appreciating the high womanly qualities which she exhibited, and which I certainly did very much admire.'

"'Well, I really do not know what to advise you to-night; but I will think of it, and depend upon me, cousin, you shall have my sympathy, and my assistance too, if I can think how to make it useful; so now, take that kiss, with my good-night, which I hope will act as a charm and give you pleasant dreams and quiet slumber.'

"An hour after this, when I thought everybody in the house was in bed, except myself, while engaged over my account books, a light step and gentle rap came to my door, to which I said 'Come,' and my sister tripped in, looking as serious as though she had lost a pet kitten, or her mocking bird, or had heard that Melto was sick. I dropped my pen and drew her upon my lap to kiss away the gloom upon her face. As I did so, I saw a tear trickling down her cheek, and that told me that something unusual had troubled her sympathizing heart.

"'What is it, darling?' I said to her; 'who has made you unhappy? Come tell me all about it.'

"'Indeed, I should like often to tell you all about it,' but you are so busy all day, and at night I do not like to interrupt you while posting books; but I could not help it to-night. I do want your advice so much. It is not I who am unhappy; it is cousin Abel. Poor fellow! May I tell you a story? I am afraid it is too long, but if you will listen to me, I am sure you will be interested, and you can then give such sensible advice. Will you?'

"I assured Luenda, that I would listen to her patiently and would advise her to the best of my ability. I fully expected to hear that Abel had fallen in love with her, and had made his declaration, and she wanted my advice as to what she should do. I certainly was surprised at her narrative, but the case did not look desperate to me, knowing as I did who uncle Dick and aunt Sophy were, and the probability as to who was the visitor to their cabin. But I did not tell Luenda all I knew: I merely advised her to get ready for our contemplated visit; and to induce Abel to go, tell him that Emily's father has forty or fifty slaves, and no doubt some of them knew all about uncle Dick's cabin, and that you will get me to make the inquiry, without letting him know that I am in the secret, as to why he wants to find it again. I will suppose it is mere curiosity. But you may assure him that I will find its whereabouts, before we return.

"This proposition, made to him the next morning, had the desired effect. Abel was now as ready to go as we were, and impatient for the day. This was Wednesday, and we were to start Saturday.

"That night I had another visit from Luenda. This time she did not come in tears, but with a perfect glow of smiles, holding an open letter in her hand. I could read the purport of that letter by her face, before she spoke of it; but I played dumb.

"'Oh Daniel, do I disturb you? You must let me this time. I have such a grand secret to tell you; such a beautiful *denouement* of the drama of uncle Dick's cabin. I am so full of it I shall burst if I do not tell you. And such a surprise for the principal actors in this amusing 'comedy of errors.' I have just received this letter from Emily. Do take time to read it, or will you listen to me? It is long, but not a word too much. You, for you are a man, can have no idea how interesting it is, because it is an affair of the heart. But you are a dear good brother, for now I know you are going to listen. Do let me get you a pillow, that old lounge is so hard.'

"This I declined, but I stretched myself quite at ease, and Luenda seated herself near the light, upon a low stool, where she could place her head close to mine, and then she read—I believe that I can repeat every word of that letter—

"MY DEAR LUENDA: *Do* come and see me. I looked for you last Saturday; but I am very glad you did not come then, as I was so sad—quite unfit too see company. Next Saturday I shall expect you. Do not disappoint me, for I have so much to tell you. And do not excuse Daniel upon any account whatever. Tell him I am dying to see him, and have such a store of kisses hid away where no one has found them since I gave him that parting one last Fall.

"I want your cousin to come too, but I fear that I am too sad to cheer him up as I could have done two weeks ago, for I have met with a great loss and have had such a romantic adventure, that I cannot look back upon it now, without growing almost wild with the excitement it produced. I believe I was calm at the time, but I am sure I have not been so since. I cannot bear to be alone a moment. I need cheerful company. I need you and your dear brother. Oh how I wish I had such a one. Such a dear good soul; always so cheerful. How I do want to sit down around our great fire-place, listening to one of his long stories, that he tells in such a manner, that you seem to go right along with him to the very spot he describes. Isn't it a beautiful accomplishment for a man, to be able to make himself so interesting and agreeable to any company that he happens to be in, male or female. It will be a real charity in him to come and visit me now. Tell him so. But I have not told you what made me so sad.

"I have lost my old nurse. Dear old aunt Sophy! How she did love me. And such a death bed scene! I think there never could have been any thing like it, and connected with it such a succession of strange events. Why Luenda, I am either the heroine of a romance or else the subject of a strange hallucination. I sometimes almost fear the latter, for the Knight-errant on a black horse, who came at sundown, at my greatest need, and rescued me from imminent peril, disappeared with the morning sun, as mysteriously as he came, and has not been heard of since. He has been thought of day and night, until I fear my whole nervous system is seriously affected.

"The worst effect, however, upon my mind, is produced by the doubts that come over it at times, between sleeping and waking, whether my Knight was really a man or the mere vision of a dream. Reason tells me it was no vision. My heart assures me that what I saw was a man, and a very handsome one, exceedingly well-bred, with a soft, pleasant voice, which I would give more to hear this minute, than I would any other music on earth.

"There, Lu., the secret is out. I have told you what I did not dare to tell myself. And yet this man to me is a mystery which I shall probably never solve.

"But how I do wander. No doubt you will think that I have lost my reason, as girls generally do when they lose their hearts.

"I have often thought that more real affairs of the heart between the sexes, have received the initiative step in scenes of danger or distress, when there was no probability of the desire being consummated, than amid the walks of every day life. So it was with me.

"You remember the terrible storm we had last week. My strange adventure occurred that day. You must not laugh at me if I tell you all the particulars. I could not bear it: I really need your sympathy. But you must hear my story. It will relieve me to tell it. I am sitting up because I am so nervous that I can not sleep, without acting over again scenes that I wish I could forget.

"I left home in the morning for a lovely walk of four miles over the hills, to visit my old nurse, whom I had not seen since my return; as she was too unwell to leave her home, and had sent word by her husband, that she should die if I did not visit her soon, and she never could think of going until she had seen me. I asked uncle Dick if she was sick, but he said 'not to speak on, though she is powerful weak. I have to tote all de wood and water and look arter de pig and chickens. But I reckon she'll come round all right when de wedder git little warmer.'

"Uncle Dick's cabin is in the most romantic spot in the world, I believe. It is the valley of happiness, or has been to him and aunt Sophy, since my father gave them liberty to build and live there quite free.

"Approaching the place from the foot-path that I followed, you come suddenly out of the woods upon a precipice, twenty or thirty feet high, that overhangs a small stream, beyond which there seems to have been a little valley scooped out of the rocks, just big enough for a garden, at the upper side of which stands the cabin.

"The foot-path terminates in a notch, or fissure of the rock, from which there is a pine log that must have floated down from the mountain and lodged with one end in this notch, while the other rests against a tree upon the opposite bank. The top of this log, uncle Dick has hewed off flat, and fixed up a hand rail, so that it makes a safe pleasant bridge into the 'enchanted valley,' and saves nearly a mile of distance; the only other entrance being along the creek, where it enters or leaves the valley, and in high water is not always passable. I have sometimes ridden it when the water was up to my stirrup. I used to visit the place so often, that uncle Dick built a very neat stable in a sort of cave in the rocky wall, close to the house, which he had designed for a cellar, instead of which he built a cave cellar of stones and dirt, sodded over; and fortunate it was, for it saved the life of his pigs, and that now celebrated black horse.

"I met uncle Dick as I came, just crossing the bridge, going for me, as he said: 'Aunt Sophy am mighty bad dis mornin'. Did spec she would die in de dark; but am little better now, an I thought would jis step over'n tell young misses.'

"I wanted him to go right on, and get a physician. I had heard that a new one had settled at The Bend, since I had been gone—a very smart, intelligent Yankee doctor, and withal a handsome young man—very much liked by one portion of the people and hated by the other, because he hated slavery, and was not afraid to say so.

"Uncle Dick insisted upon taking my basket, and would see me over the bridge, and then must carry it up to the house. I suspect part of his politeness was owing to 'fond recollection' of the times that same basket had brought him a dram, which, like all his race, he is very fond of; and as he never takes too much, I am fond of indulging him. So I gave him what he wanted and hurried him off; for I found the poor old woman, as I thought, very ill, though not immediately dangerous; but I charged Dick not to come back without the doctor, and that he should stop at the house and tell our folks that I should remain in the valley until he returned, at all events; and if I should not get back before night, to send little Jock over with my pony.

"I must think that it was the greatest of all comforts to the poor woman, to have me with her that day, as I read and sung and prayed with and for her; and exercised my arts of cookery, trying to get up something that she could eat. Most of the day she was comparatively easy, but failing in strength all the time, and conscious that the end of life was approaching.

"Toward night, when the storm commenced, aunt Sophy grew worse so fast, that I was almost wild with alarm, lest she should die before Dick returned, and before the doctor could get there, and that I should be left alone in this wild place through such a terrific storm; perhaps through the livelong night, alone with Death.

"I know it is weak to be so superstitious; but how could I help it? The thunder was terrible, and my thoughts horrible. In heavy rains the water, I knew, rises so high that it overflows the valley, and cuts off all communication. If so now, I should be utterly and helplessly alone all night, perhaps longer. In my alarm and confusion, I could not recollect how long the water would remain up, if it should rise. I only knew that it had sometimes overflowed; for I had heard aunt Sophy talk to Dick, and tell him to be sure and not be away and leave her alone at such a time, for it would frighten her to death. As she kept continually talking about the storm, whenever she heard the thunder, and asking me if Dick had come, I think that the fright really did hasten her death.

"I went repeatedly to the door, to look for Dick coming over the log, or to listen for the sound of the doctor's horse upon the rocks, coming up the creek; but I went back every time, gloomy with disappointment, and every answer that I gave to aunt Sophy's anxious inquiries. seemed to wrench away one of the threads of life, until I looked every moment for the last one to snap, and then I believe I should have gone distracted. Oh was n't it awful?

"At last, although I had listened so intently, for the sound of horses' feet, and heard none, I heard a voice at the door and sprang to open it, without asking who was there. I was content to know it was a human voice, and when I saw a fine looking gentleman, handsomely mounted, I thought of course it was the doctor. Who else should I think it could be, as no travelers ever passed that way; and so I bade him light and hurry to put up his horse and come in before it rained. I was quite as anxious on my own account as his, that he should get under shelter. He had barely done so, when the rain struck the cabin with such a roar that I could not have been heard if I had attempted conversation; and when the storm lulled, the death scene followed. There was no time for conversation. After that, however, I grew more calm and was able to offer my guest something to eat, and the way that he appreciated it, proved that he was no ghost, however mythical he has since appeared; for time has proved that he was not the doctor I had expected.

"After that he assisted me to arrange the corpse, and then we sat down by the fire, and as I was pretty well worn down with exercise and excitement, instead of entering into any conversation, I fell into a sound sleep, out of which I was awakened to a new scene of terror. The great rain had brought down drift-wood and gorged the narrow passage of the stream out of the valley, damming the water so that it was up to the floor of the cabin, before we discovered it, and rising an inch or more every minute. The doctor proposed to swim his horse and land me at the foot-path, but I knew it would be almost certain death to him to undertake it, though he was willing on my account to take any risk, and actually had got his horse ready saddled at the door, for which he must have waded three or four feet deep.

"The next step was to get me up on the roof, from which he built a bridge to the rocks, up which we were just about trying to climb, when we heard the welcome sound of Dick's voice telling us the water was falling. By daylight it was out of the house and the fire rekindled, and then the doctor—no, this mysterious stranger—left us, and with the exception that he passed some of our people coming after me, he has never been seen or heard of since. Indeed, he was never heard of in the settlement before nor since. It certainly was not the doctor, for Dick did not find him. He came the next day, but he is an entirely different man from the 'knight of the black horse.'

"Now, who was he? Why did he come there? What providence guided him to me at that terribly-trying moment? And why has my heart become so interested in a stranger never seen before—never to be seen again?

"Oh come and help me solve this mystery. Do save me from myself. If I do not succeed in changing the current of my thoughts I shall lose the power to think. I cannot read—I could never have written all these pages upon any other subject. This has been a relief to my fevered brain.

"Pray come to me and make a long visit, and while you are here I *will* forget my trouble and be gay and happy. Do not tell Daniel, he will laugh at me. Truly yours, EMILY.'

"There, you see how I have kept her confidence; but you will not laugh at her, will you?"

"No, indeed; I will soon cure her malady. I wish you would write to her at once; you must do it to-night, and I will see that the letter gets into the mail in good season, which it will do before you are up in the morning; and, of course, she will get your answer to-morrow. Tell her we will be up next day, and that you are dying with curiosity to see that 'happy valley' and uncle Dick's cabin. Ask her to ride over and meet us there at noon precisely. Then we can get to her father's at two, which is their dinner-hour. Say to her that Daniel says we can go up the hill-road, by the way of Gaskell's saw-mill, and the old log meeting-house on the North Branch, and so strike Valley Run by a bridle-path that he is acquainted with, not a mile above Dick's cabin, and thus make the ride really shorter than it would be by the river-road.

"In this way, we will work up the affair and produce a grand surprise, and as spectators we will enjoy the effect, which will be hightened by having the closing scene upon the very spot where the first act opened.

"Luenda was delighted with my 'stage management,' and the prospect of a stirring melo-drama, in which she was to be an actress. It was now nearly midnight, yet she must write her letter, which I must get into the post-man's hands when he passed at 8 o'clock, for upon that all our plot depended. So I went to bed, and she away to her work and mischief.

"Abel was in good spirits all the next day after this conversation, for Luenda had told him there was not the least doubt about her brother being able to find out among some of the negroes, all about uncle Dick's cabin. 'Indeed, he said,' so she told him, 'that he rather thought he had heard of it somewhere, and was not sure but it might be on Valley Run, which we could cross on the road to Strawntown.'

Saturday was a delightful clear day, about the middle of May, and the route I took was new to both my companions; and though pretty rough for a wagon, it suited us well, as we were all good horse-back-riders and had sure-footed beasts. From one point, after we ascended the line of hills that shut in the broad river bottoms, there is a magnificent view of the Ohio and mouth of the Kanawha, and across into Ohio, which is rapidly gaining upon Virginia; because freedom lives upon one side, and slavery festers upon the other. Gazing upon this scene we spent more than half an hour, counting in that time not less than ten boats and rafts, floating wealth and future greatness to some villages that by-and-by will be cities on the banks of the beautiful Ohio.

"From this point we followed the blazed trees three or four miles through heavy wood-land, that looked a mine of wealth to Abel's Connecticut eyes. This part of the road was slow and tiresome. You all know how we have to pick our way through the mud of such a wood's-road; yet we enjoyed it exceedingly. Abel had, what was to him a rare and great treat, the sight of a flock of wild turkeys, fifty at least, leisurely walking away, as much as to say, 'Ah ha, Daniel Scott! We know you in your Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes, and that you have no gun with you. Gobble, gobble, gobble; good-bye to you, old turkey-hunter!'

"We also started several deer, and although nothing new to my sister, she had a nearer and better view than ever before, as they hoisted their white flags and sailed away before the wind.

"The squirrels were unusually numerous, and leaped about in the sun, or ran up the trees so near to us that we could have struck them with our riding-whips, and Melto tried several times to chase and catch one in her teeth, so that altogether our woods-ride was cheerful, interesting and amusing.

"Upon North Branch we found a fund for conversation in the appearance of this rough new settlement. Abel declared that such a waste of good timber as he saw around Gaskill's saw-mill was a downright piece of wickedness that would some day be visited upon the country in the scarcity of an article which all seem intent upon destroying as fast as possible. To look at the over-abundance of wood, this appeared to be prophecying of a time a good way ahead; but since I have seen the prairies, I must say that I have felt the force of the charge; that it is wicked to wantonly destroy so many good timber trees, as the settlers have done and are now doing in Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana.

"The settlement at Gaskill's is one of the very roughest of a rough country. It was located to make lumber to float away down the river, and it has gathered around the mill a class of settlers who have no ambition above their daily bread. The men are engaged in logging and hunting, barely enough to obtain a few of the necessaries of life; and the women employ the most of their time in dipping snuff, smoking, and sitting listlessly in the chimney-corner.

"As their children seldom have but one garment, there is but little making or washing to be done, and cooking is of the most simple sort. Some of them raise a little flax and wool, and spin and weave cloth enough to cover the family, but some of the cabins that we passed had not a rod of inclosed ground, and the family, of course, seldom using any vegetable food except corn-bread. Pork and venison both come from the woods, the pigs running almost as wild as the deer.

"In the course of the ride to-day, by going a little out of the road I had an opportunity of showing Abel a specimen of his mountain angels—the veritable Jack and his interesting family.

"As we approached the cabin, which stood quite alone in the woods, with not a particle of cultivation about it, nor a stick of fencing, nor any other building but that one room, we met Jack just coming in with a good-sized shote on his shoulder, and one of his boys toting his gun. I made pretense of detaining Jack to talk about a job of work that he had promised to do for me, and in the mean time advised Abel and Luenda to go in and rest a few minutes and get some water; as I knew that an excellent spring was about all that Jack could boast of among his possessions. My object was to give them a good view of the interior, as this cabin represented the abode of a large class of inhabitants in this region. It might serve as a useful lesson to both sister and cousin. Abel rather hung back, but Luenda, the mischievous witch, whispered to him 'that this was the abode of Angells, and he ought, as a true knight to enter and see if he could discover any striking resemblance to the one he had met in the enchanted valley.'

"Speaking aloud she declared that she was both tired and thirsty, and besides she was glad of the opportunity to make the acquaintance of a family that she had heard her brother speak of as the one who had so often furnished us with such excellent venison.

"There was no help for it; Jack had to be polite whether he would or not, and accordingly invited us all to go in. I declined, but the other two accepted. This maneuver was watched from the inside of the house by the mother Angell and nine young ones, who I knew very well were not in trim for company, as I had already discovered that it was washing-day for the sole garment of the children—a day that never comes oftener than once a month, and generally, I think, only quarterly, and in some cases semi-annually.

"There was but one room and one door to the cabin, before which we stood sentry, so that the order that Jack's wife gave to her family upon the approach of visitors, was one that seemed rather difficult of execution.

"'Now, you brats, scatter. To the bush with you. D'ye hear?'

"Fortunately there was a window; not a glass one, but closed with a board shutter, held in place by a pole on the outside. One of the boys, who did not mind his primitive Adamic costume, ran around and moved the pole, and down went the shutter with a clatter, and that aroused two or three of Jack's dogs, which ran to the backside of the house to see what was the matter just as a stream of children came through the opening. Either the dogs or children had stirred up an old sow and pigs, and the whole stock of dogs, pigs, and young Angells, were immediately promiscuously mixed in a a race for a thick clump of bushes, down a ravine, about twenty rods distant.

"Just on the brink of this ravine Jack had located a section of a bee-tree which he had brought home from the woods. This was about four feet long, standing upon one end, and in the melee was upset, and started rolling down the hill in company with dogs, pigs, and children, more to our amusement than their comfort. The concatenation of events was not yet complete. The bee-gum in its flight rolled over the nest of an old goose, rousing her and her mate to fury. Then the dogs seized the pigs and started their music; the bees and geese pitched into the naked bipeds, and such a concert of unearthly sounds as they raised, I never heard before, not even in a grand Indian pow-wow.

"Luenda was at first silent with astonishment or fright, but the love of the ludicrous overcame all other considerations. Abel, with his natural dignified reserve, and Connecticut-educated sense of propriety, bit his lip and held in until the old goose joined the grand escapade, and then he could hold no longer. Jack was at first reserved. He simply said, prefixing it with a short hot word, 'There goes that dang'd old bee-gum! Now, they'll catch fits.' But when he saw the geese, he forgot all idea of the damage to property or progeny, and lay down roaring with laughter.

"As soon as the storm somewhat subsided I told Jack that, owing to the circumstances, I thought we would defer the visit, and mounted our horses and rode off. Luenda had even forgotten how very thirsty she was; but she did not forget for a month to laugh heartily every time she thought of Jack Angell and his family of shirtless children, barking dogs, squealing pigs, squawking geese, and stinging bees, intimately compounded.

We were now obliged to push on rapidly to be in time for our appointment. I thought perhaps Abel would recognize the locality when we struck Valley Run, but his mind was either already occupied with the ludicrous scene that we had lately left, or else, his head having now got right on the points of compass, the stream appeared to run in an opposite direction.

"A little before we reached the valley, I galloped ahead and arrived just in time to see Dick leading Emily's horse into the little stable. As I rode up I threw my bridle over the horse-shoe-hook at the door and entered unnoticed until I had the young lady in my arms, determined to have those promised kisses, unmolested by the presence of strangers.

"Emily had evidently 'got herself up' for the occasion, in a style well calculated to attract the eye of a widower or a bachelor. She wore a neat jockey riding-cap and feathers, beneath which her beautiful hair hung in ringlets, and under that her bright, sparkling, blue-grey eyes flashed, and set off her rosy cheeks. Her riding-dress of light grey cloth, that would not show the mud, nor be injured if a little fell upon it, was extremely becoming. She was, I suppose, as unlike in appearance to the pale, agitated person that Abel had seen in the same room, as a girl could easily make herself. Then she was in a plain undress; now in a full riding-suit, and stood, whip in hand, in the doorway as Luenda and Abel galloped up.

"Not a minute had elapsed since they turned the point of the ledge, where they entered this magical valley, and Abel had not had time to recover from his surprise at thus finding himself in a spot which had produced such a powerful effect upon his mind. He was certainly not in a favorable condition to recognize Emily in her new form, as the spirit of his late dreams. Indeed, he scarcely saw her; and as Luenda somewhat covered him from her view, Emily did not recognize Abel, until my sister leaped from Melto's back.

"Instead of being met with the ardor she expected, Luenda saw that Emily's eyes were fixed, and her whole mind absorbed by some other object. In short, her faculties were petrified with astonishment. There, directly before her eyes, and within a few feet —so near that she could not be mistaken—there, upon that famous black horse, sat its mysterious rider. There, present to her sense of sight, was the very man of whom she had dreamed by night, and earnestly thought by day, to prove that he was not a mythical being, nor a creation of a disordered mind. This was what had caused her momentary abstraction.

"Luenda had reached and taken hold of her, and said, 'why, Emily Strawn, what is the matter?' before she recovered her presence of mind. Abel thought her conduct strange, but he did not recognize her person, and of course not the cause, until Emily answered, 'Oh, Luenda, you naughty girl, why did not you tell me it was your cousin?'

"'Why, bless you, dear, I have not yet had an opportunity. Abel, do come in, and let me introduce you to Miss Strawn.'

"'No, not that, I do not need any introduction to this gentleman,' extending him her hand with the air of an old acquaintance. 'We have met before. We spent a terrible night in this cabin. Now I understand why you wanted me to meet you here. It is some of Daniel's mischief, I am sure. But I forgive him all, now that I know who was my companion in that night of misery. You have taken me quite by surprise, I must acknowledge. If I had the least suspicion of who was coming, you would not have enticed me here under false pretenses. You bad man, I wish I could take back that kiss you stole by slipping in upon me unawares.'

"'Take it then,' suiting the action to the word.

"'Never mind what has passed, Miss Strawn,' said Abel, 'but if you will allow me to be your champion, I will try to guard you against all such assaults in future, at the risk of my life.'

"'I thank you, and do not doubt you, as I have already had ample proof of your willingness to risk your own life to save mine, although I was then to you an utter stranger. Now that I am known as a warm friend of your dear cousins, I feel my claim is strengthened. I thank you most sincerely for past services, rendered under most peculiar and trying circumstances. I assure you, I shall call upon you now with confidence to protect me against the assaults of this wicked Daniel Scott.'

"'And is he to protect you from his sister also?' said Luenda, 'for I have not yet had my kiss—you were so confused by the appearance of your knight—'

"'Of the black horse—I will finish the sentence, and freely give what you lost at first sight, owing to my surprise.'

"'And may I not,' said Abel, 'as an old acquaintaince, also claim a share of those sweet courtesies of life?'

"'Not as an old acquaintance so much as in evidence of my joy at finding who my acquaintance is, and in heartfelt thankfulness for your kindness and noble conduct to me in affliction. I will offer this little token as an acknowledgment of how much such conduct is, and always should be, appreciated by a woman.'

"She then not only accepted his proffered kiss, but reciprocated it handsomely, and, as she undoubtedly felt, affectionately. It was the first generous kiss of pure love, burning mutually into their hearts. Oh, how those hearts must now ever bleed for each other; for I have no doubt that he is, through some freak of theirs, alive and a prisoner to the Indians. Perhaps to obtain information of our forces; perhaps to subject him to torture; perhaps to gratify the request of some squaw; perhaps to be adopted as a son in place of one slain. I have known cases among our red-skinned enemies that would be counterparts to any of these queer notions.

"Poor Emily! she does not yet know that she never will kiss that loving husband again; nor will she ever forget that first kiss in old Dick's log-cabin. And never shall I forget the peculiar look of satisfaction that glowed upon Dick's face, as he stood, hat in hand, witnessing the affair that I have described. It seems that the shrewd old fellow had penetrated deeper into the secrets of his young mistress's heart than she had anticipated, through her anxiety to find out the name of the stranger, after she discovered he was not the new Yankee doctor. Dick had taken a strong liking to Abel, and had almost as much anxiety to discover him as Emily, and his delight now to find that he was one of 'Massa Scott's folks,' was extravagant.

"This little plot of ours having been worked out to our entire satisfaction, we were ready to proceed to Strawn Town for dinner. Luenda was overflowing with joy and mirthfulness, and started Melto off on a sharp canter, as much as to say 'come Daniel, we'll ride ahead, and leave the two lovers to themselves;' and so we did.

"Surprising, is it not, how a woman does like to promote courtship when it will not interfere with any of her own little arrangements. This was the case with Emily, who, finding that she did not want 'the doctor' herself, and seeing that he was a very promising, good-looking young man, had invited him to meet us at dinner on purpose to introduce him to Luenda, in hopes of working up another match. I may just as well mention here that my sister was as much taken with 'Dr. Evens' at first sight, as Emily was with Abel, and that the two couples were married very nearly at the same time.

"We found, as usual, a house full of company, for nothing delights Strawn more; and after dinner, when everybody was in the best of humor for enjoying it. Luenda trapped me into telling of our visit, not from, but to, the Angell's; and I think, if possible, that company rather beat this in the degree of its boisterous mirth at the recital of that ludicrous scene. As everything was fresh in my mind then, I have no doubt I put in all the embellishments.

"And I have no doubt that by this time you are all convinced that I have put quite enough into this story, which reminds me of one Dean, a preacher in our neighborhood in Ohio, who undertook to give an account of how he was converted from a sinful life in North Carolina, and what occurred to him on his journey from there, after he had 'a call to preach.' After continuing the subject fourteen months, he told us that having got half way on his journey, and finding he had used up all his money, 'he was obliged to quit traveling and preaching and take to mauling rails for a Kentucky planter.' One Joe Hays, an irreligious dog, who happened to be present, sung out that 'it was a pity he had not always continued at a business for which he seemed so much better fitted than preaching. He might be a good mauler, he certainly was good for nothing as a preacher.'

"The old fellow, to prove that he did understand one branch of his business, threw off his coat and at once tried his hand on Joe, and that broke up the meeting and finished the story.

"Now if any of you are not satisfied with the length of mine, I will end it as old Dean did his, by proving, as he did, that I am better at mauling than story-telling."

"'That is impossible,' exclaimed a dozen voices. 'Joe Hays is not here, and so you will have to go without your chance for a practical demonstration, but not without a unanimous vote of thanks from this mess for your kindness in entertaining us so far, and thus beguiling time of the tedium of many weary hours by your rare exhibition of talent as a story-teller. We certainly do not think old Dean could beat you, however well he beat Joe Hays. It would be hardly fair to say that we are not satisfied, but still we have no doubt, if we had more time, that you would be able to go on through another week in the same entertaining manner—particularly entertaining to men around the camp-fire.'

"Well, then, gentlemen, as I shall not be able to 'make my mark' upon any of your faces, as the preacher did, I must ask you to remember the features of my story, so far as they are connected with the Indians, either relating to myself or my friend, and if any thing should ever develop a fact to elucidate any of the mystery, no matter how many years hence, I ask as a favor that you will not fail to communicate it to me immediately. To-morrow we shall part; several of us to mournful homes, otherwise the remembrance of this campaign would be for ever pleasant—the memory of present companions will always be to me a sweet satisfaction."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

**In frontier life the scenes and characters are ready-made.**

The kaleidoscope, as it revolves, presents the same colors, but shows a constant succession of new scenes by the varied arrangement the colors take relative to each other.

If the reader of this work chooses to consider its romance, he has then only to imagine that optical instrument has made a new revolution. If the same colors are presented he will certainly find them newly arranged, and I hope in no less pleasing forms.

If he will be kind enough to consider the work what it really is, narrative or history embellished, he will find the figure of the kaleidoscope equally applicable. A new field of view is about to open. The author returns to personal narrative.

As a romance I could have arranged all the characters and introduced them in regular succession from first to final, making events to suit the circumstances of each.

As a narrative I could not control events. They come, like the colors in the kaleidoscope, and arranged themselves beyond my control.

I have taken scenes and characters ready-made, and introduced them to the reader as they were presented to me. Hence these ever-shifting views.

This has sometimes brought things before the reader "wrong end first," according to his vision, but it was according to my necessity.

This is illustrated in the view of the most prominent scene introduced, in "the first night on the prairie." Some of the characters flit across that scene out of the regular order of history. Yet it was that glimpse which induced me to pursue the development of those and others, which outcropped accidentally, or were sought after as the miner seeks for precious metals from slight surface indications,

New characters like new figures have come into the field of vision as the kaleidoscope has been shifted, and thus, although the reader may suppose they were awkwardly placed, I have produced them just as they were exhibited to me. I could not write history, nor speak of events where I was an actor, without speaking of myself. I must do it again. I hope the personal pronoun I, will not appear offensively prominent.

It is one of the curiosities of the human mind that it sometimes loses all recollection of events that have transpired, as effectually as though they had never been. Here is an instance of this which will illustrate the idea:

One of the earliest recollections of my childhood, when I could have been only four or five years old, is a ride *en croupe* on "the old sorrel mare," with my grandfather, to a great funeral. It was something which made a strong impression upon my mind, because it was that of a very young woman whose face appeared beautiful—almost as beautiful as my mother, who was to me the handsomest woman that ever lived. I thought the deceased was a girl, she was so fair, but I was told that she was the mother of the pretty baby that I saw. I remember too that the crowd of people at that funeral far surpassed, in my infant imagination, the great unnumbered host that gathered in New-York City yesterday—the 6th of March, 1865—to pour out libations of joy over the prospective funeral of slavery in America.

There was another thing that became fixed upon my mind at the same time, and that was the name of the person who was dead. "Atwater," I supposed then was a name given because the place was upon the shore of a pond or small lake—large enough to my mind to float the vessel upon which she had lost her life. I fancied it must have been on that, because I knew no other, and the great city to which she was voyaging, I supposed somewhere in the boundless extent before me. This mile-wide sea would not look so large now. But of that dead lady I heard and treasured the name, and also that of her husband—it was so appropriate as I heard the tones from the old church steeple—Abel At-water. As I had just learned to form the initial letters of my own name with chalk, or charcoal, or with a stick in the dust, so I took to making his until the great A's floated in my mind like ships on the ocean.

I think that I must have gone home in one of these ships as I have no recollection of riding upon old sorrel. I did afterward ride with my father in his old "dug-out," on a fishing excursion upon another pond, and I wondered whether that was the sort of ship the lady was in when she died. If so I was not surprised that she was chilled to death, since I was so cold before I got home that my teeth chattered, which I supposed about the next thing to dying. However, my life was saved by the old kitchen fire and my grandmother's check woolen apron, aided perhaps, by a dish of warm "hasty pudding and milk."

Such is childhood, but its recollections never have become entirely obliterated. They only failed for a little while; including the period mentioned in the opening chapters of this tale. Then they come back "in a dream."

I had the same ride over again behind my grandfather, and arrived on the shore of the lake, where I saw a crowd of people, but the corpse was not the one I saw when a child—it was now that of a man, yet there was something that seemed familiar in his countenance. There upon the coffin was my rude chalk-marked "A. A." Its occupant then must be the owner of those initials. Presently, in looking over the water, its waves were covered with the same initials. They came floating like tiny little ships right upon the beach where I stood. Again the scene changed, and the multitude of people were all in Indian costume, and the lake was not the one I had known in childhood, but the one I had seen for the first time a few months before; and there was the lone grave in the cedars, and there was the omnipresent A. A., rude as my own work, carved upon the bark of that tree.

When the mind has been previously occupied with a subject it is not singular that it continues in dreams, but when things that have been forgotten for years are thus revived during sleep it appears wonderful. So it did to me in the present case after I awoke, and I pondered long upon the matter until memory revived all that had not become utterly obliterated in connection with the subject. Among other things I believed that I had heard years after the time of that funeral, that Abel Atwater had gone to the great West, which has absorbed so many of the young men of New-England, and I had some vague recollections that he had been killed in the battle of Tippecanoe. But if so, how could he have been buried upon a spot nearly one hundred miles distant from the battle-ground? Still I could not divest myself of the impression given in that dream, that the lone grave was the final resting-place of the husband of that beautiful woman, and father of that child.

I soon began to collect together all the incidents that I had heard among my acquaintances about the battle, and others that I gleaned from time to time, not from the Indians, for, as I have already stated, they were so reticent, that I might almost as well have inquired of the dry bones among the cedars, as to ask any information of people who had determinedly sealed their lips upon their great national disaster. Old Shobonier's story, which I have given in chapter tenth, was told me long after this time. I have also stated in that chapter how much this grave, and that dream, and a sort of involuntary determination of the mind to connect the incidents of childhood with this quiet sleeper upon the lake shore, disturbed my mind; but I kept my own counsel, because I knew that people would say, "what nonsense."

It was, I think, during my first Winter on the prairie, that I met with "Mike the hunter." He was encamped upon a small island in the Kankakee marsh; which is an almost impassable morass, several miles broad, extending from near South Bend in St. Joseph County, Indiana, across the width of three other counties, Laporte, Porter, and Lake, of which it forms the southern boundary, and extends beyond the State line into Illinois.

Mike's island was only approachable while the marsh was frozen over, unless by boat. It was surrounded by miles of grass, except on one side, so tall that it would hide the approach of an army. He was in the habit of going on in Autumn and remaining there alone through the Winter; sometimes without seeing a white face during the whole time. Indeed, he never appeared delighted to see one, and was very taciturn when I first visited him, until I accidentally mentioned that I was a particular friend of Gen. Tipton, for whom he had an unbounded respect. That served as an introduction. A friend of Gen. Tipton was somebody worthy of the respect of Mike Haskins, and from that moment we were firm friends. He even invited me to stop for dinner, having a young 'coon upon the spit, which certainly looked inviting to a hungry man. I had with me plenty of bread, a luxury that Mike seldom indulged in during his hunting-seasons. Thus we made joint stock and fared sumptuously, each one cutting off outside slices from the roast, which were placed upon clean chips in lieu of plates. It tasted sweeter than some expensive hotel dinners that I have eaten.

Mike's dwelling was like all Indian wigwams, made of poles set in the ground, in a circle about fifteen feet diameter, and bent together at the top, and kept in place by horizontal rods lashed to them, the whole covered with marsh grass to the depth of three or four inches, and made quite warm by a small fire on the ground in the center, under an opening in the top, out of which the greatest part of the smoke finds its way. In this hut he cooked, ate, and slept, the bed being composed of dry grass, deer-skins, and blankets.

Another similar structure served as a store-house for peltry, and usually two or three carcases of venison, as a provision against a stormy time. This wigwam was made tight and strong enough in the frame to keep out the prairie wolves, which sometimes come sniffing about. They often suffered for their temerity, for although Mike disdained to waste ammunition upon "the varmints," he did not hesitate to administer strychnine to every one that came near enough to smell his fresh meat. He always kept a stock of "wolf-bait" ready for their use, near all the regular approaches to the island. This also served to keep the Indians at a distance, lest their dogs might share the fate of the wolves. I do not think Mike would have cared much if their masters had eaten of the same food, as he had no love for the red race. He often shared his meat with those he met, but he would not allow one of them to sleep in his wigwam. He even carried this feeling so far that he would never leave a wigwam standing when he abandoned it, for fear that some Indian might lodge there. Every Spring, after loading his canoe, he would "set fire to his house and go off by the light of it," preferring to build a new one when he returned in the Fall, if he should do so, to the same spot, which was not quite certain.

Mike was a singular specimen of rude intelligence, and it is remarkable that such a man should not only be contented in a desert and solitude, but that he should adopt this mode of life from choice. He had no books to beguile time of its long weary hours, because he did not know how to read them. His only companions, when I first visited him, were a dog and pet 'coon, both of which I would have fed with wolf-bait, if they did not take to it naturally. The dog had a natural instinct not to touch the poison, and had acquired his master's hatred of an Indian, and that I believe was the real reason why he kept him, though Mike said that it was because "he was great on 'coons."

The pet 'coon was an intolerable nuisance. He had a disposition to see the inside of everything. He wanted to search all my pockets, and had a great curiosity to know the contents of my powder-horn and shot-pouch. Mike was obliged to put every thing out of the reach of this "pet," which was worse than a mischievous monkey, and whenever he left his place to tie him up securely.

One day, having fastened young mischief as usual, he went off on a long hunt. Returning to camp about dusk, when objects were dim, his dog ran a 'coon up a tree, close at home.

"If I hadn't been a darn'd fool," said Mike. "I might a know'd it wa'n't a wild un; but I didn't stop to 'sider 'fore I let drive and brought him down a dead 'coon, that's sartin. When I pick'd him up and saw the rope round his neck, didn't I feel bad about the gills? His 'tarnel mischief used to 'muse me like, and I could a cried to think I'd killed the critter. But wa'n't my dog glad though, for he and 'coon never was on good terms. The dog thought it was contrary to nature for him and a 'coon to live in the same wigwam. I don't think I felt much like crying after I got inside and found what the villain had been about after he gnawed his cord off. I s'pose he had seen where I kept my powder buried in the sand under my bed, for I had disturbed him that morning—he always slept in my bed—to get out some to fill my horn. So he had dug the place, filling all the skins and straw with sand, and had tried his best to gnaw a hole into one of the canisters, but found the tin rather too much for him. I kept my matches in an old shot pouch, hung to one of the poles, pretty much over the fire, and, as I thought, out of his reach, as he always had a longing to look into it. But he had managed to climb up and empty the whole contents of the pouch into the fire—matches, bullet-mould, lead, needle and thread, knife, a few pieces of money, all went together down among the coals. I was very tired and sorter sorry when I got in, and tumbled down to rest a little 'fore I cooked my supper. There I dropped asleep, and didn't wake till daylight. Then I was cold and hungry, and started up to build a fire, and cook some dinner, supper, and breakfast, all under one. I commenced raking over the ashes and found a chunk of lead, and in it my bullet-moulds, money, knife, and needles, were all fast, but not a spark of fire, nor could I find a match in any pocket. I had plenty of raw meat and tallow, but nothing cooked, and the nearest possible place that I could get fire was six miles across the marsh. I knew pretty well that something had got to be did right off, for there was every prospect of a snow-storm, as the wind was blowing strong from North-East.

"I took a chunk of tallow in my pocket to gnaw upon, and started on my tramp of six miles afore breakfast. It was twice that back, you'd better b'lieve, and will if you undertake to tote a torch that far agin a North-East snow-storm, thick enough to blind a fellow, let alone burning his fingers, and not a tree for shelter in the whole distance. I knew how 'twould be, and therefore started with a back-load of hickory bark to keep up my supply of fuel, and withal came very near losing my fire 'fore I got over, to say nothing of danger of getting lost, as I should a done if the marsh hadn't lately burnt over. That's my last 'sperience, I tell you, in the pet 'coon business."

I found Mike a valuable acquaintance, for he knew every foot of the country, and could tell all the routes that could be traveled from point to point without roads, and where roads would be made in future. His Indian lore was abundant, and his memory enabled him to repeat a story word for word that he had heard years before. I purposely led him on to speak of the battle of Tippecanoe; and when he found what a good listener I was, he would talk six hours upon a stretch. The next year when I visited him, it was his turn to listen, while I read a long record of what he had himself told me, yet how I should have it on paper, surpassed his comprehension.

Speaking of what was said by newspapers at the time of the battle, that Gen. Harrison ought to have pursued the Indians and annihilated them, waked up Mike's knowledge of the country.

"Now look a here, stranger, the only way that could a bin done was with the cavalry, 'case no footmen nor artillery, nor baggage wagons could keep up with a parcel of Indians, on the rampage. I s'pose it's the matter of sixty miles from the battle-ground to this swamp, and it is nigh upon eighty miles long, with only one or two trails through it. The troops couldn't a started in pursuit, you see, until they found which way the Indians had run, and that wa'n't till the day after the battle, and by that time every mother's son of 'em was safe on these islands, or on t'other side of the Kankakee, where ten thousand troops wouldn't been worth as much as my old 'coon dog. Just look about you, stranger, and see if this wouldn't 'a bin a nice place to bring troops in the middle of November, when I have know'd the worst storm of the whole Winter to follow just such nice weather as we had after the battle. There were plenty of our fellows wanted to follow, but some of us knowd that's 'zactly what the tarnel Indians 'spected we'd do. If they had tolled us into this trap, they'd a took half our scalps, that's sartin. I've seen a heap o' sign of that battle 'bout here since I've hunted these islands. I found six of our guns in one place, with the bones of a man and horse. I s'pect it was some prisoner they'd brought off, who slipped away, and then got lost himself, and stuck in one of these mire holes, where the horse floundered upon the poor fellow, who was probably lashed fast with the guns, and there they perished together. The villains brought off several prisoners; one I remember very well belonged to the same company of volunteers that I did; his loss was mourned I believe more than any other man, or else it was 'case we come to know more of him, through an uncle, or some such kin, who told us all about him and himself too. He was the grandest story-teller that I ever met with anyhow."

When I told Mike about the "lone grave," and how much my mind had been exercised about it, and my suspicion who its tenant was, he jumped up and clapped his hands most emphatically, as he declared: "not a doubt of it. Why I remember his name as well as I do my own. I have thought on't a thousand times. I had known the Atwoods, Atlees, Atlakes, and Atfields, but I never had heard of an Atwater before. And as to Abel, I ought to remember my own father's name. I'll bet my pile that's his grave. Some squaw has taken a likin' to him, and that's why he was buried there, and she has a sort o' religion about it, to come once a year and look arter it. If that's the case they'll be mighty mum about the matter. You'll never get a word out of 'em, 'cept by accident or some sort of strategy. They're great on a secret."

After I had obtained a great many facts, already given to the reader, from the great storehouse of Mike's memory, I determined to use "strategy" to obtain more. To this end I studied Indian character and Indian language at the same time. I visited them in their wigwams, and whenever one visited mine, never suffered him to go away hungry, and in all of my dealings with them, and they were large, I aimed to obtain confidence by "doing as I would be done by." Whatever advantages in trade I might take of one of my own race, I determined not to cheat one of theirs. Above all, I would not sell them whisky, and this assured them I was not their enemy; and therefore I never had any trouble from drunken Indians. If one came to my house drunk, I peremptorily ordered him off. If a chief was present he would drive the delinquent away as he would a troublesome dog. Two or three times when I knew they would have whisky to celebrate some great day in the Indian calender, I brought a keg from the city in my wagon, thus saving some of them a journey of eighty miles to and from Chicago. This I carried to their camp and delivered them a temperance lecture, more effective, I have no doubt, than though I had tried to enforce total abstinence.

An Indian will get drunk if his trader will sell him "goodnatoss," and while in that condition, if the trader cheats him, he despises him ever after, and sometimes hates him enough to take his life.

I believe that I made money, and at the same time gained self-respect, as well as that of all respectable Indians, by refusing to sell them the means of intoxication.

Old Shobonier often came to visit me, and if at meal-time, was given a seat at the table, where he particularly enjoyed a cup of good coffee. It was upon such an occasion that he "opened his heart as he had never done before to a white man," and told about the battle of Tippecanoe.

Strategy had gained one point, accident favored me in gaining another.

One of the warm sunny days of March had tempted a large Indian family, which had Wintered near Lake Michigan, to break up their encampment and move South toward the Kankakee to enjoy the early fishing season. Though it is only some twenty miles distance, there is a difference of three or four weeks in the time for fishing between the waters of the Mississippi and St. Lawrence.

My location was upon " the divide," between these waters. To the northeast of my house an open prairie stretched away toward Me-won-i-toc's village, and beyond it eastward, a distance of eight or nine miles. In crossing that long stretch, this party, which included four or five generations, with all their movable property—their real estate was the wide, wide world—were overtaken by a "norther," and a severe snow-storm. The patriarch of the family must have been over a hundred years of age. He was the oldest and most venerable looking Indian I ever saw. When they arrived at my store, the old man was so benumbed with cold that he could not alight from his little shaggy pony. Some of his family lifted him off and set him down in the lee of the building, intending to let him remain there while they went about half a mile farther, to put up wigwams in a sheltered place in the grove.

Seeing what they had done with this aged and feeble old man, I stepped to the door as the last of the party were hurrying off, and began to protest against such inhuman conduct.

I spoke in not very classical Pottowottomie, at which my auditors only stared, looking stupid, but made no reply, till at length the old man said, "Taw-wa me—no Pottowottomie."

That explained the matter. They were Ottawas, and those present, of the younger branch of the family, did not understand any other dialect. They construed my words to mean that I objected to having the old man left where they had placed him, under the shelter of the building. They also feared that I was opposed to their encamping upon my land. Some men are so, and drive the Indians away. This idea produced a smart commotion. The storm was upon them, and there was no other suitable camping-ground where water was convenient.

What was to be done? The squaws jabbered like a flock of geese. One of them ran after and shouted to one of the men to come back. He could talk English. Before he arrived, however, I had helped the old Indian up and led him inside, and seated him by the stove.

This put a different face upon the matter, and I soon explained that I had no objection to their encampment at the spot designated, and told them where to get several armfuls of hay to make their wigwams more comfortable, pitched as they would be upon the snowy ground.

Thus they went off to their work quite cheerful, after seeing how very comfortably the old patriarch was bestowed. He was sadly chilled, and his old blood lacked vital force to warm his body, even by the stove, which he hugged closely, and looked intelligence that he would like to have it warmer. I did not wish to add more fuel as I intended to shut up shop directly, and go to my dinner. The house was some forty rods distant, and thither I invited the old man to go, when I was ready.

I simply said, "Marchee neen wigwam." If I had bid him go to his wigwam, the word "keen" would have been used in place of "neen." He understood that he was bid to go, and he groaned in anguish at the idea of being turned out in the storm to shiver, before his people could build him a shelter and start a fire.

The mournful expression of his face told me what was working in his mind, and I said in answer to his thoughts, not his words, for he spoke none: "Choin! neen wigwam," and then his face fairly beamed with satisfaction, which was not decreased when I spread a large warm blanket over his shoulders as he stood up to go with me.

At the house there was an open fire-place, and roaring hickory-wood fire, and a smoking dinner on the table, all of which, particularly the strong, hot coffee, the old fellow enjoyed amazingly. Then I filled him a pipe and seated him in an easy-chair in the corner to enjoy the comfort of savage and civilized life combined.

By this time it had grown dusk, and I heard voices in the direction of the store-house, talking loud and rapidly.

Presently two faces flatted their noses against the window to look into the room where we were, but their eyes did not recognize the object they sought, until I went to the door. Then they came in, and such a jabbering as ensued would have confused my ears, even if I could have understood their jargon. Fortunately I could only understand from the motion of things, that the two young squaws had come to conduct their grandfather to the new wigwam. I objected and tried to make them comprehend that he might sleep here by the fire. I thought I had succeeded before they went away, but I had not.

Pretty soon they returned with their father, the man with whom I could talk, and I think that I probably never had quite as high a recommend for charity and generosity as the old Indian gave to his grandson. This was confirmed by the fact that I had not only fed and warmed the old man, but the two girls, and was now doing the same to their father, and insisted that he should not take his grandfather out in the cold and storm that night.

I asked the young man the name of my guest, and he answered "Sabaqua." I replied, "a friend of Shobonier?" To which he answered, "Yes; Shobonier is Pottowottomie name; Shovalya is 'Taw-wa name."

Here I had learned two things of use to me—the double name of Shobonier, or rather triple name; though never called now by the name of Meltonewah; and that the Indian under my roof was the veritable one that rode off the battle-ground of Tippecanoe with a white prisoner, which I now believed I could identify; and that Sabaqua could, if he would, tell me who was sleeping in the lone grave among the cedars. There was one thing that I had not yet learned, which I did afterward, that the name pronounced Sho-val-ya is written Chevalier.

Accompanying this Indian was a young lad, whom I asked if he was brother to the two girls who first came after the old man. I forgot the word used to indicate brother, but I had occasion to remember it afterward, for when I visited the camp next day, according to promise to old Sabaqua, his wife made a sudden exclamation of surprise, and in connection with other words, used this one for brother, pointing to me and repeating it several times. I understood her as saying that I was brother to Ne-o-com-i-to, and I asked her interpreter if I understood rightly; but to my questions about that brother, I could not get a word, but I caught one from the old woman that I knew meant grave, and that it was on the shore of "Musqua-ock se-a-ba," which I also knew was the name of the lake of the red cedars; and I jumped at the conclusion that she believed me to be the brother of him who was there buried, and about whom I had so long pondered, talked and wondered; which had occasioned in me a very unusual exercise of the bump of inquisitiveness.

Instantly I determined to hold the Indians to this idea, in hopes it might enable me to develop something useful to the friends of that white man, whoever he was.

Two days afterward I went again to the camp to have another talk. As the snow had melted off, and it was now a sweet Spring day, I hoped to find the Indians more communicative; but I found that they had struck camp early that morning, and were all off, I could not tell where, and perhaps should never see them again. An idea occurred to me suddenly, that being within a few miles of the lake, the old squaw would visit the grave of Neocomito, which I believed was the Indian name of the occupant of the grave. I determined at once that I would make an effort, and if possible confirm my suspicions, that this was the name that had been given the prisoner brought off by Sabaqua, and that he was the same who had cut the initials and date upon that tree, and requested to be buried there.

With these thoughts in my mind, I walked off briskly through the woods toward the lake, as though on a hunting expedition. I was however disappointed in my expectations. No one had lately been near the place. I lingered in the vicinity till nearly night, without seeing any one. I returned disappointed, but was delighted to find Mike Haskins waiting for me. I could not have been more glad to meet a brother than I was him. I told Mike the whole story, and asked his advice.

"Shall I follow their trail and try what more I can pump out of these reticent rascals? I am sure they know something of this mystery."

"So am I, but your accidental resemblance to the occupant of that grave, whether or no it is Atwater's, don't matter a mite, though I've not the least doubt on that score, but it has given them a chance to cover their tracks; so all hope of getting any direct information from these cunning red-skins is about done for. But they're the greatest cowards on earth, and no doubt they are trembling now like kicked dogs, lest you should find out that it is your brother, and demand the price of his life. I reckon that's what started them off in a hurry. I met them t'other side of the lake aiming for the grove west of the creek. They want to get out of your war path, depend upon't. Nothing but old age made that squaw gabble. She'll come to make her annual visit where her adopted son is sleeping, on the anniversary of his death. That's custom. Now if we knew when that was, we would play on their superstition. From the fact of their coming down from the north just at this time, bag and baggage, makes me think it's 'bout time for their once a year ceremony. Wish I had a bin on hand when the old man was here by himself, for I can talk Taw-wa like a streak. Spent two years among them chaps. Know this old Sabaqua like a book. Drew a bead on him at Tippecanoe, just as Atwater was wounded. His horse running off with him spoiled my fun. I'd a had that chap, sure. I've told him so often. He's a real first-rate old fellow now. That battle took all the fight out of old Sab. I got acquainted with him when we were surveying the State line—me and Gen. Tipton. Did I ever tell you? Must do it some day, and about the way I fooled the Indians when I came away from Fort Dearborn massacre, up where Chicago is now. That was the time that every hair in my scalp-lock ached. But let that go till we get this job fixed up. I think I'll dream it out to-night. If Mike Haskins can't circumvent an Indian he must be getting old."

I thought he could outtalk one at any rate, and perhaps circumvent him in that way, if in no other.

He was astir early. I knew by his countenance that his dream had been satisfactory. Indeed, I thought he was still dreaming, or talking in his sleep, as he sat before the fire, drawing a sort of map in the ashes with the poking-stick. I heard him say:

"A white flag! Well, that is 'cording to the superstition of them critters. And when they're particularly religious about it, they put up a new one every year, regular like, as a sort of death-day present. Now when does that anniversary day come about? That's the question?"

The question was addressed to the fire, and to make it answer, Mike gave it a sudden punch. He did not know I was listening. Therefore I merely said, "Good morning, Mike. How is your dream?"

"Well, I sorter calculate I've got it out straight. I only want to know what time o' year the red varmints renew the flag at the grave? 'Case that's the time the man died. If it is 'bout now, why you see that's what old Madam Sabaqua is moving down this way for, to have the regular pow-wow over her white son's grave. Lord help you, but these savages are awful superstitious. About what time o' year did you notice the last new flag at the Cedars?"

"Let me think. It was early last Spring. Yes, I remember now; the ice that day had undergone one of those magic changes, when from being solid to-day, it is black and rotten to-morrow, and next day entirely gone."

"All right. That suits my calculation about time. The annual visit is at hand. How is that flag now?"

"It is pretty well tattered."

"Then we will renew it. I am going on to Chicago. You go down and put up a new flag and rub up the briars and small bushes, and trim up about the grave generally. It will have its effect upon whoever comes there. When I come back I shall do so by way of old Sabaqua's camp, and while there I shall tell a story that will start their eye teeth; see if I don't. I will give all your early history—you were born in Connecticut, war'nt you?—by some mountain or pond?—Oh, pond ha!—well, any where for a starting-point—what was your father?—cooper, ha!—very well; your mother was beautiful, of course—and your brother—I mean the one that is buried at the lake, under the name of Neocomito—let me see! Oh, he was your twin brother—that accounts for the striking resemblance—and was a great warrior. Yes, yes, I can tell the story now. Thank'ee for all this information. I will go out and get my powder and other stuff that I want, and then see if I don't astonish them Indians."

Three days afterward I did exactly as Mike had directed; and in doing so I altered the appearance of the place wonderfully. I gave it an air of improvement that showed the work of civilization. After I had started toward home, I looked back and saw a canoe about starting out from the opposite shore of the lake, with two old Indians in the bottom and a young squaw paddling. As I was in some thick leafy bushes out of sight, I stood still to watch the movement. The boat shot across directly toward the point of cedars, the resting-place of my extemporized brother. There the two passengers landed. They proved to be old Sabaqua and wife. First they examined carefully some rocks near the shore; I did not then know why—then they came around to a convenient place to walk up the steep ascent. When they emerged from the bushes, they were about twenty feet from, and in full view of the spot they had come to visit, and where they stood for some minutes. It is idle to say that Indians cannot be astonished. They do not appear to be, because they have the faculty of hiding their emotions. Here these two had no occasion to conceal any thing from each other, and they were pictures of amazement.

At length, however, after uttering a few words, they moved forward, and kneeling by the grave, began crossing themselves upon the forehead and face and breast.

In all the region around the great chain of lakes, this observance, which is a trace of the great work of the Jesuit missionaries, was common among many of the elder Indians of all the tribes. In every religious rite or ceremony the sign of the cross was frequently seen. It was but rarely met with with among the younger members. As Mike said: "They had no religion to speak of, that's sartin."

While old Sabaqua and his wife were thus kneeling, with their heads bowed down, I left my place and moved along gently, and kneeled upon the opposite side of the mound which I had so neatly repaired. Taking off my hat I allowed my long white hair to flutter in the wind and sunlight, in full view of the simple-minded superstitious couple on the other side, as soon as they raised their eyes. The effect was such as to draw an exclamation of surprise from each of them. To that I responded, "He is my brother;" using the same term and accent that I had heard the old squaw use a few days before. Then I rose immediately and walked hurriedly away without saying another word, or looking back to manifest any interest in my former acquaintances.

Of course the whole thing was dramatic, acted for effect. It is needless to say it was successful; although it would have appeared to a mere looker-on, who did not understand the motives, as most supremely ridiculous.

Yet looked upon in its proper light, it was a most impressive scene—one of solemn grandeur—illustrative of the history of a race of people, of whom this old man, bent under the weight of a hundred years, was a strong type.

He had come to perform a solemn religious duty. No doubt he felt that this was the last annual visit to the grave of his adopted son.

His people, once the possessors of half the new world, he also typified. The race was reduced to a mere handful, and that like himself, was fading away.

Who would keep the white flag waving over his grave?

It was solemn to reflect how this man, himself tottering on the brink of his own grave, had come with his gray-haired wife to pay a tribute of respect to a white man captured in battle with his people, who were fighting for the supremacy of this region, now being overrun by the pale-faces.

They mourned for this wounded prisoner because he had been adopted in place of a son slain in that battle. These two relics of human strength and power in decay, were fit representatives of the decay of the red men. Their tribute of respect to their adopted son showed that although called savages, they had human hearts that would have honored some persons who claim to be civilized.

These two knelt together upon one side of that grassy mound which constituted all that any one man can call his "real estate;" while upon the other was a representative of a race that had been for two hundred years pushing the other race back, for the sake of grasping more and more of the coveted hunting-grounds of those who live by the chase, instead of cultivation of the soil.

What an impression this scene and the thoughts that accompanied it must have produced upon the superstitious minds of these two old people, particularly when the white man rose, pointed to him sleeping below, and said, "he is my brother." They did not doubt the assertion, for that impression had already attached to their minds; but by what mystery of mysteries had this "pale-face" discovered their well-guarded secret? What "great medicine" had guided him to this spot, and told him who slept in its quiet seclusion? They alone of all living knew this secret. Then who had told it to this white brother?

Such were the thoughts that passed through the minds of Sabaqua and his wife, as they wended their way back to their wigwam, carrying with them the little white flag they had come to float over the grave of Neocomito. It was not needed. Another hand had anticipated their pious work. Then they gathered their numerous family around them, and related their story, all of which was new to the younger portion. They traced the history of Neocomito from the battle to his death, and told how they had laid him to rest in the very place that he had selected, and had promised him not to reveal it to any one, unless his squaw came to inquire after him, which he said she would do, and showed them how they would know her, and that they were to lead her to that place in the cedars, that she might weep all alone.

Now his brother has come and put up his flag, and we have no more to do—our work is ended."

"Not yet," said Mike Haskins, who had approached the circle of listeners unperceived by the speaker, and unheeded, if seen, by the others.

Not yet, till the white brother has heard the same story that I have. Now I have come to tell you about him. Will you listen?"

Indians are always ready to listen to a good story-teller. He is their newspaper. Mike said to me afterward: "I never had a better audience. They were all in the right mood to listen." Old Sabaqua's tale had impressed them with something mysterious, and they swallowed Mike's romance without question.

I must defer what he said until I bring up some of the more important matters connected with this history. I cannot hurry events; they will take their course.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

The sea, its wondrous tales shall tell.

In 1811 there were no steamboats, railroad nor telegraph lines, to convey rapid information. Consequently only the most meagre outlines of the battle of Tippecanoe had reached the home of our two volunteers, Scott and Atwater, before the former arrived. He intended to break the sad news to the wife, or widow, in a gentle manner; but in spite of his kind intentions, his sympathizing heart betrayed itself in his face before he could speak.

It was at the close of a somewhat sharp early Winter day when he arrived. Emily saw him ride up, and was at the door by the time he could alight from his horse.

Their eyes met in the last rays of the setting sun. At first, her face was correspondingly bright, but a cloud spread over it instantly, when she saw that he was alone. Still she was calm, for that was her nature; calm as upon that terrible night of the death scene of old Sophy.

"Oh my poor husband. I never shall see him again. You need not tell me. I know it all. I was present when he fell. I saw him as plain as I do you now. He and his horse were both shot together. There was much blood; yet neither fell. It is useless to tell me that he was only wounded, and has been left behind; and will be restored to me again. I know—I knew at the time when I saw him ride away in the darkness, that he never would return. Thank heaven that one friend has been spared. You may say, 'It was all a dream.' I know it, but oh, how real it seemed! I am not surprised. God help me to be resigned to this dreadful affliction."

Dreadful indeed it was, to that young wife, who had but just begun life, with a husband whom she loved devotedly. They had barely got settled in their new home in Ohio, when the spirit of adventure impelled Abel to make the journey that proved to him so disastrous, and left his wife worse than a widow; because there was still a little uncertainty about her husband. Scott was sure that he had been carried off a prisoner; and for two or three years he hoped, more than believed, that the "missing man" might return. He used every possible effort to discover some trace of the lost one, without obtaining a single ray of light. He made a journey among the friendly Indians of his old acquaintance in Ohio, and offered a large sum if any one would undertake to procure him information. He found many of those that he relied upon most for assistance, had already been corrupted by Tecumseh or his brother, and Some of them had joined the hostiles. Those who were still friendly to "the Americans"—thus distinguished from the British—were willing to aid Scott, but dared not undertake a journey into the hostile country. Even if one should, where could he go; and in what tribe look for a white prisoner? as there were Delawares, Ottawas, Pottowottomies, Miamis, Weas, and scattering warriors from a dozen other tribes in the battle of Tippecanoe; and if, by any freak of his captors, Abel had been preserved alive, who could tell where to look for him now?

Still Scott was untiring in his "pursuit of knowledge, under difficulties" that would have deterred any man of less perseverance. He joined the United States' forces in the war of 1812, and was present in all the battles with British and Indians, up to that of the River Raisin, where Tecumseh was killed. At this place, Scott received information which he relied upon as the history of the fate of Abel Atwater. In the course of the fight he rode upon a powerful old warrior, in the act of scalping another Indian. That is, he had seized the scalp lock and was brandishing his knife, when Scott's sword clove his skull. At the same moment the wounded one calling him by name, Scott discovered that he was a Delaware from Ohio—an old acquaintance. After the battle was over he returned to talk with him, and found him mortally wounded and aware that he must die. Thereupon he professed to tell the truth in answer to inquiries about the battle of Tippecanoe and the prisoners carried off from the field. Scott described Abel; and the Delaware at once said that he remembered him perfectly—that he was present when he was taken prisoner by a Pottowottomie chief—that he was only slightly wounded, and his captor desired to keep him alive for some special purpose. In the retreat the prisoner was lashed fast to a horse, upon which was also fastened a lot of guns and some other plunder, the whole being the joint property of the chief and the Delaware. On the way the two quarreled about the division of the spoils, which was finally settled in this way. When they reached the great Kankakee swamp, where the Indians knew they would be free from pursuit, this prisoner escaped and went off, horse, guns and all. The chief was very mad and swore he would kill the Delaware, if he did not recover the prize, and he started in pursuit. Two days afterward he found the prisoner and horse mired in a slough and both dead, and there he left them and took himself out of the way. "And from that day to this," said he, "I have not seen old Ne-o-moc-i-taw. To-day I was shot in the back, by some of our people, and directly afterward he whispered his name in my ear, and would have taken my scalp, if you had not rode up at that moment and split his head with your sword."

This account, so circumstantially given, was apparently true. Yet if it was so, then the tenant of the lone grave was not Abel Atwater, because, as we have already learned from Mike, the bones of that prisoner were still lying mixed with those of the horse and guns in the slough where he met a terrible death while trying to escape. But as Scott did not doubt the story, nor the identity of the person who thus perished, here ended his inquiries.

There was, at least, one iota of comfort in this information. It was now certain that Abel was dead, and not lingering in hopeless captivity as a slave to savages, and that he had not died by barbarous Indian torture.

This extinguished the hope of ever recovering the Will, which it was known that he had upon his person when taken, and probably when he died. It would be as useless to think of recovering a body from the depths of the ocean, as from the mud of the Kankakee swamp, even after the termination of the war, when the Indians had been subjugated, and were comparatively peaceable.

All parties interested knew what that will was, from the copy which Abel had made and left in a note to Scott, and which he had brought with him to the widow. Still no attempt had been made toward a legal settlement, until about the time she had concluded to finally relinquish the idea of her husband being alive.

The property, according to the will, would go mainly to a daughter who was born a few weeks after Scott's return. At his request she was named Indiana, and ever, to the best of his ability, he acted toward her the part of an affectionate father.

Seven years after the loss of her husband, Emily yielded to the persuasion of all her friends, to put aside the widow's weeds, and became Mrs. Daniel Scott. A better match for herself or her child could not be conceived.

It is probable that she would not now have consented, but Scott had met with a great misfortune. Notwithstanding he was one of the most careful, prudent business men, he could not control the fates. He had joined others in a heavy produce business, and they had bought a steamboat and loaded it for New-Orleans. Scott furnished capital, and took a mortgage on the part of the boat that he did not own and also upon real estate.

Through downright neglect, the boat and cargo were not insured, and with all on board, including two of the owners, it was lost by striking a snag in the Mississippi. The same week, six hours after the policy expired, their pork-packing establishment and storehouse, on the bank of the Ohio, was reduced to a small pile of ashes and a large spread of melted lard, floating away as it burned upon the flood of the river.

These losses left Daniel Scott a poorer man than he was when he started his first venture in Indian goods in New-York; for he gave up every iota of his large property to satisfy the creditors of Richards, Green & Scott.

He might still go on with business, in a reduced way, and recover again, by using the funds that he had carefully managed for seven years, for the widow and orphan, but, he said, "what right have I to use it?"

"The right," said Emily, "of a husband and father; for such you shall be. It is not for lack of respect, nor love, that I have refused until now. You know very well, that I loved you dearly, long before I saw my husband, but it was as a brother—the betrothed of my adopted sister, who was lost by the same foe to us, and to our early hopes of matrimonial happiness. Till now, what could I offer to you, but a weeping heart, for all your kindness to me and my child. Now I can do more, and will do it freely, gladly, lovingly."

It was under these circumstances that Daniel Scott became the husband of his lost cousin's widow, and father to Indiana Scott Atwater; who was a most interesting child; loved by her step-father as truly as though his own, but not more affectionately than she loved him. Indeed, from her birth this fondness had been growing stronger and stronger every day.

The very acme of her childish happiness was to climb up in "Uncle Daniel's lap," and listen to one of his stories; of which he always had a great stock on hand. He had often told her about "the shipwreck" off Saybrook, and about "the baby"—her "baby brother," as she always called him. But the point of deepest interest to her was "that boy," floating away upon his raft on the waves, into outer darkness, to be lost forever.

"Why uncle Daniel," she often exclaimed, "why didn't he go ashore on t'other side of the river?" Her views of the ocean were all limited by her knowledge of the Ohio river, upon which she had often seen men cross to the other side; and she even knew that a strong wind would drive a boat or raft across, as she had had that experience; for once playing in a boat moored on the shore, some of her companions loosened it from its fastenings, and it drifted quite to the other side with its precious freight, before it was recovered.

"And, uncle, only to think! Jimmy Letmore was so frightened that he cried, and I was not one mite afraid. I knew that you would send Sam after us. Now tell me why that boy didn't go ashore on t'other side? And why didn't negro Jim take the boat and go for him, just as Sam did for us? And why didn't the boy get off the raft when he got across, and go up to one of those houses? Don't you think he did, uncle? He was big enough, was n't he?"

It was a long time before her young mind could be made to comprehend the depth and breadth of the ocean, and how irrecoverably the boy must be lost, who floats away in the dark upon the "waves of the great deep."

One day it struck Indiana that she had never heard this boy's name; and she came running to Scott, full of the idea that he must have had one. With great earnestness she said: "Why have n't you told me what it was? I am sure if anybody told how I drifted away across the river, he would tell my name; and I don't see why you have n't told me his! Had n't he got any? I don't know any little boy that hasn't got a name! The little niggers all have one: some of them have two or three."

"I have not told you, darling, because I did not know. He certainly had a name, because he had a mother, and Connecticut mothers always give their boys names, and some of them become pretty well known in the world afterward. I suppose that I have heard what this boy's was, but I have forgotten it. I remember that his mother was Mrs. Weston, a widow, and this was her only child, poor woman. Your father has given her a great many dollars, because her boy was lost on his vessel, and could not work for her any more. I will ask cousin Althea, the next time I write, to tell me what he was called, so that I can tell you, and then you never will forget it."

"Oh thank you! uncle Daniel;" and away she ran again to tell her mother all about the new interest that would be imparted to the story.

Unfortunately, cousin Althea could not tell what her little niece so much desired to know, for the widow Weston had moved away. But it came at last, with new and additional interest to make it ever remembered by Indiana.

By the time her mother and uncle Daniel were married, she had begun to comprehend that the ocean was broader than the Ohio river, and that ships were "very great floating houses;" for she had seen steamboats, which in spite of Capt. Clark's prognostications, had been established upon many of the principal rivers and were becoming one of the great institutions of America.

Up to this time, Indiana had called Scott "uncle Daniel." Looking up in her mother's face one day, she said: "Why should n't I call him father? If he is your husband, I am sure he must be my father, just as Mr. Letmore is father to Jimmy. Shall I always say so, mother? He won't be sorry, will he, if I don't say uncle Daniel any more?"

Of course Mrs. Scott assured her that nothing could be more proper, and it would undoubtedly please "uncle Daniel," to have a more endearing appellation from his darling little girl.

As soon as Indiana was able to comprehend the situation, Scott began to trace upon the map, the place of the shipwreck of her father's vessel, where "that boy" was lost; and then he marked out the route that Capt. Bushnell—whose name had become a household word in the Scott family—had sailed in his several whaling voyages to the Pacific Ocean and Behring's Straits. Nothing delighted her more than to hear her father's stories about the sea, the ships and the whales; and she was always on the *qui vive* for something new.

One evening, Scott came home from the post-office, with an open letter in his hand, and his face all aglow with smiles. Indiana met him as usual at the door, with a kiss and her arms around his neck. Then calling to her mother, she said: "Oh father has got some good news, I know by his looks. What is it? Something that I may hear? Is it about the whales?"

"Yes, darling; after supper, when your mother, and aunt Luenda, and the doctor, can listen; for it is a long story from Capt. Jonathan Bushnell, and it tells the name of "that boy" that was lost from the Abel and floated out to sea in the dark."

"Oh does it? I am so glad. Let me run and tell them all, and perhaps old Tilda will hurry a little, just for once, with the supper."

And away she ran, full of the joy of childhhood, to communicate to her uncle and aunt the glad tidings that, "Father's going to read us a story; and its about the sea, and the whales and the ships, and that boy, and it is a letter from Captain Bushnell."

Oh happy, innocent childhood!

Impatient too, as soon as supper was ended, to see the family all in their places around the sitting-room fire, where she had drawn her father's arm-chair and light-stand, and placed his slippers, and her own seat close at hand. Then she hurried each one to be seated, and ready to listen.

"For father is going to read about ships, and the sea, and tell us a great story about Captain Bushnell, and about whales. Oh it will be so nice! And then we shall hear what was that boy's name. Come mother, do hurry; father is ready now."

The name of the lost boy had become a fixed idea with Indiana. She wanted something certain to impersonate him, to complete the history of the shipwreck.

Scott had to remind her, that this was not one of his stories that he was going to tell, but one of Capt. Bushnell's, in a letter to his wife, about something that happened to him on his last voyage.

"The letter is written at sea," he said, "but I cannot tell when or where; since Althea has not sent the first page, which, she said, only related to family affairs. But here is what he writes about his adventure with a pirate."

"We had a beautiful run all down the Atlantic coast, and expected to double Cape Horn without stopping at Rio Janeiro, but God willed it otherwise.

"While off the coast of Brazil, I was engaged one pleasant day in my cabin, working up my reckoning, when I heard a commotion on deck, and a man sung out those words that always serve to wake all the sleepy old whalemen: 'There she blows!' and directly, 'There again!' 'There they are, one, two, three, four, five!' By this time, Timpson, my first mate, was down, and spoke to me in great excitement:

"'We have run smack into a school of right whale, sir. Shall I order the boats away? I think we can secure two or three. My boat is all ready; the others can be in half an hour.'

"But our furnace and try-kettles are not up, you know, Timpson. And it would put all hands to double work to get them up, and then if we should only get one small whale, it would hardly pay the extra labor and detention; as you know the works will be in the way if we should have a rough time round the Horn.

"However, when I went on deck, I became as enthusiastic as the rest of the officers and men, and gave leave for Timpson to go off at once, telling him that the second mate should follow, in time to be at the death. With the rest of the crew I got out the third and fourth boats, by which time the man on the look-out, passed the word, that the first mate had struck, and the whale was towing right toward the second boat, which would also be fast, in all probability, in ten minutes; and so it proved. And as the man said it was a real old bull whale, good for ninety barrels, I put every man in the ship to work getting up our kettles and brick and mortar, and setting up the try-works, as I had no doubt we should soon have a fish along side, as both boat's crews were resolute and determined to succeed. They made short work of the old fellow, and set up the flag in his back, for us to steer for; and then put off in pursuit of a second one which they both succeeded in fastening to, but he was not one of the kind easily killed, and took the two boats off at a fearful rate. In the meantime I had run down to the first fish, and got him safely along side, and he was a monster, fully up to the masthead-man's estimate. By this time it was getting dusk, and the two boats were out of sight. We could only steer in the direction they were last seen, and pretty slow headway we made of it, with our drag along side.

"But as soon as this fish was secure, the men needed no urging, but drove ahead, and before midnight had the kettles at work and the deck covered with blubber. They could barely afford themselves time to eat, and no one thought of turning in.

"As soon as it was dark I set signals fore and aft, on both sides, and sent four men aloft to look out for the boats. Before twelve o'clock I began to be alarmed about them, and sent up a white light to burn in the main-top You, who have never seen such a sight, cannot imagine how beautiful it is. All the sails are lighted up, and every spar and rope stands out as distinct as in broad daylight—yes, much more so, for there is the darkness for a background. We were then steering northeast, with a light southerly breeze. As soon as the light burnt out I ordered the men to look sharp, and they soon sung out 'a red light far away on the lee-bow!' This was west-nor'-west, so that we were quite off the course. The whale had changed his after the boats were last seen. However, we were discovered, the ship put on the right course, and we felt easy.

"Perhaps we should not have felt quite so easy if we had known who else beside our boat's crews had seen our signal and were steering for us. Fortunately they were deceived by our change of course as badly as we had been by that of the whale, and while steering for the spot where the light was seen, we were hurrying twenty miles away in another direction.

"When morning dawned our boats were in sight and so was a rather large black brig, which had an ugly look at first sight, and impressed me with an idea that the fellow was a pirate. I could not account for this remarkable impression, but it was fixed upon my mind.

"I took my glass and went aloft, and looked long and earnestly at this suspicious sail. I saw him slowly changing his course, so as to shape it directly for us. I believed this manœuvre was executed slowly so as not to excite our attention or suspicion.

"The two boats were resting quietly by the side of the dead whale, waiting for us to come up. We had by this time began to burn scraps, by the black smoke of which the men in the boats could see that their shipmates on board had not been idle. The stranger too, could see that we were a whaler, and perhaps let us alone, as such a ship would not be a rich prize, unless full of oil. He could also see our boats, and I thought I could detect a movement to shape his course so as to cut them off from the ship. He certainly was making more sail, and to my mind he was, to say the least, suspicious.

"Jim Baker, who has stuck by me in all weathers, from the first, has had, you remember, some unpleasant experience with pirates. He was on deck, for he is my boat steerer, and I determined to consult him, and also my third mate, Willgood by name, a real down-easter, and shrewd as they ever make men in that region of 'cute Yankees.

I called these two aloft where I could talk to them without exciting any attention from the men, if my suspicions should not be sustained. Willgood made some independent remark about being called away just then, when he had a charge of oil nearly ready to come off the fire, but he was a thorough disciplinarian, notwithstanding his words might indicate the contrary, and he hurried to 'obey the Captain's orders.' That was his religion. Jim and Willgood, both athletic fellows, had a race up the ratlins to see which would reach the top first, the men below offering to bet on the darkey, as well they might, for he beat by half a length.

"I could see by a little stir among officers on the brig that they had noticed this unusual movement of our men up our rigging, and the consultation and use of glasses on our part; and I said to myself: "If they are honest why are they watching us, since it is perfectly plain what we are?"

"Waal Cap'n, what is it? Have they got two, instead of one? We shall have our hands full."

"I fear we shall," was my brief reply, pointing to the brig, and handing the glass to the mate. He took it and looked long and earnestly. In the meantime Jim was looking through his hands, which he always insisted were about equal to a glass.

At length Jim said, addressing me in the old familiar style: "Massa Jock, may I speak?"

"Yes, Jim, certainly; that is what I called you both up here for."

"Then, sir, I shall speak right out in meeting. That am a pirate."

"Zounds, Cap'n, that is zactly the conclusion I had come to; but I was afraid to speak right out like Jim."

"Then our opinions agree, Jim. Run down as fast as you came up, and set the danger signals to the boats fore and aft. I hope they will understand them quickly and hurry aboard. That fellow, if he has got any old whalemen among his crew will understand also. I say, Jim, is your 'bull-dog' in good order for barking, if need be?"

"Aye, aye, sir."

"The 'bull-dog' was a twelve-pounder brass gun, which, upon my recommendation, had been added by the owners to the outfit, to use in foggy weather, to call home the boats, when the signals could not be seen. When this was put aboard, and it was found that we had some practical gunners, it was determined to add to the powder some balls, which could be used in case of emergency, such as I believed had now arrived.

These balls were found too small for the bore, and the sailors had employed their leisure time in covering them with leather or canvas, in the same way that boys cover playing-balls. You will see by and by how providentially this trifling circumstance worked to our advantage.

After Jim and the mate went down I took another careful look at the brig. I noticed that she was flying English colors, which more and more confirmed me in my suspicions, for I knew that was a favorite flag under which to commit acts of piracy. I was sure, from what I could now see pretty plainly, that she was not an English built vessel, nor manned by an English crew. The only thing against the theory of her piratical character, was her being such a slow sailor. This again was a good reason for the rascals wishing to exchange their old tub for such a fine new ship as ours. At any rate, I could not divest myself of the idea that we were in imminent danger, and I looked with no little anxiety to see the effect upon our boats, of setting our signals, recalling them immediately, with utmost dispatch.

I watched till I saw the boats cast off from the whale and head for the ship, and I saw at the same time, more sail set upon the brig, and two boats full of men pull out round her stern, from the other side, where they had been some time ready manned and waiting. Then I ran down and called the men hurriedly together and told them what I thought, and asked them 'whether we should fight or surrender like cowards.'

"Fight, by ——!" But I need not add sailors expletives. I found every man was 'full of fight' The fact is, as I learned afterward, Jim had already brought them to this determination by calling to mind the stories of the horrors that he had witnessed on board a pirate which took the vessel that he was upon in one of his voyages.

"You may wonder that we did not cut loose from the whale, which was such a heavy drag that we could make but little headway, as the ship was the fastest sailer.

"I had thought of that, but I did not know how much faster, and I did not like to show any thing like fear, nor make an attempt in which I might fail, as that would demoralize the men for resistance.

"There was a still greater reason. My two best boats' crews were away. Without them I could not make sail enough for a race.

"You will see directly that God's good Providence was over us, that we did not cast loose from the whale and undertake flight.

"As we had determined to fight, there was need of great haste in our preparations to arm the men. It has always been my opinion that half, at least, of the value of men, as workmen, soldiers, or sailors, consists in the tools, arms, or ships they handle. A sailor is particularly proud of a good ship. I knew that mine would fight for theirs like heroes, if they were armed. I had six good muskets, and a pistol for every man aboard, stowed away in one of the cabin lockers. These I brought up and loaded; and their possession by the men gave them double strength and courage. Besides these, they had their whale lances and knives, and some extraordinary implements of war, as you will see directly.

"What are those for," said I to to the mate, as I saw him putting some of the cast-iron balls into the hot furnace. He answered:

"Fo the magazine of that brig if she comes near enough. She wont use her guns upon us, if her object is to swap the old Dutch lugger for the Althea."

"But we must not fire on her under English colors until we are sure she is a pirate.'

"You need not wait for that surety," said he, as he took another look through the glass, "down comes the cross of England, and up goes the cross-bones and skull of the pirates black flag. He don't hesitate to tell you what he is, and what he intends. Look for yourself."

"I could not believe this true, because it would be so contrary to policy, which would be to deceive us as long as possible, so I turned my glass again in that direction. Sure enough, the flag was going up, though not from the deck, but from the hands of a man on the top. Presently there was a commotion on the brig's deck, and pistol or musket-shots appeared to be fired at the man aloft. We could see the smoke, and then the fellow ran up the rigging to the very masthead, apparently to keep out of the way of the balls that had been sent after him, probably for setting this pirate flag without orders, which had given us most valuable information and determined our course. It told us that we had desperadoes to deal with, and must fight with desperation for our lives.

I was now willing to see the balls heated, and I ordered all the arms, including our long-handled whale-lances, properly disposed for action. I wondered what Willgood was at, when I saw him urging the fires under the kettles, particularly one that was so arranged that it could be hoisted by the bail, out of the iron frame it rested in over the fire, and be carried by the tackle across the deck and emptied all once into a large vat where the hot oil served to partially melt raw fat. I said to him, "Will, what trick are you up to now?"

"You shall see, cap'n, when them boats come along side, as they will do at the starboard gangway."

"I replied that one wonld board upon that side and the other upon the larboard side.

"How are they going to get there over that whale?"

"I had not thought of that, nor had those in the boat who were pulling for that side—pulling with all their strength, so as to board us both sides at once, while we were weak-handed, before our own boats could reach the ship. They too were pulling bravely to give us their aid in the desperate struggle which the black flag plainly told them was approaching. The four boats were almost flying, but I could easily see that ours were distanced, and I therefore determined upon a new course. I tacked ship and bore directly toward the brig, intending to strike her midships and sink her if possible.

"Timpson comprehended my movement in an instant, and altered his course for the brig instead of the ship, in hopes of drawing off the boats from us, but they paid no heed to anything but the one object at first aimed at. Indeed I do not know that the officers in command noticed the change in the course of my boats, or that their vessel was in as much danger of being boarded as mine, though not quite so soon, for the boat on the starboard side was now close aboard.

"Willgood sung out to the men he had selected to "stand by," and they swung the kettle out of its place, and he attached a line to a hook in one side, and as the boat struck the ship he dashed two barrels of boiling oil over the side upon the heads of two dozen of the worst-looking ruffians I ever saw, at the moment they were huddled together in the bow to spring for our chains. Oh, such screams of agony and oaths of rage, I never heard uttered before, and did not believe possible except in the very depths of pandemonium.

"At the same instant there was a great commotion and loud curses on the larboard side, and I hurried over to direct the men detailed to watch that gangway. I saw what was the matter in a moment. The officer who was steering having his eye intent toward our deck did not see the whale, and therefore his boat came full headway on, striking a little quartering, and instantly upsetting, spilling the villains all into the water, except two or three that jumped on the whale, and made for the gangway ladder, which had been purposely left down to draw them in a body to that point, where they could be more easily managed. The men would have instantly disposed of these fellows on the points of their lances, but they cried quarter, and threw down their cutlasses and two or more long, ugly-looking knives from their belts. Some of their companions in the water, they called too in Spanish, and they came up and surrendered, and all were ordered into one of our boats under guard.

"In the mean time the vessels had neared each other, but we were not likely to strike the brig, for she had discovered our intention and changed her course, while we were too busy to change ours. It looked now as though we should just rake by their larboard quarter, and I feared they still had men enough, notwithstanding the loss of the two boat's crews, to board and overpower us before Timpson could reach the ship. At this moment I could not see him and his men, who were straining every nerve for us, but I soon learned where they were from a rough remark of Willgood.

"——Damn the bloody villains, they are firing upon our boats. I'll give them hell."

"He seized a scoop and lifted one of the red-hot balls out of the fire and into the gun, which it fitted exactly; now the covering had burned off and the metal expanded by the heat. Here was that development of the providence of their being too small for the bore; for if they had fitted it at first they could not have been forced in when red-hot. Now, they rolled down and fitted nicely, without any labor or delay. As soon as Willgood seized the scoop to take the ball from the fire, Jim lighted his match and stood ready, and trained the gun as the ball went down upon the oakum wad, and at the moment we went grazing by, entangling and breaking some of our yards in their rigging, the mate sung out with a pretty strong expletive, which I omit, "give it to them, Jim;" and he sent the red-hot messenger of death, crashing down into the very vitals of the brig.

"There was but a feeble attempt to board us, readily repelled by the lances and a few ladles of hot oil, which our men could easily throw upon the pirate's deck, as it was ten or twelve feet lower than ours. The most of their men, too, were busy upon the opposite side, where our two boats crews were approaching with a determination to board and sweep their deck, not doubting that by this time the pirates had carried ours.

"It seems to you perhaps in reading, as it does to me in writing out this account, that all these things must have taken time. So, of course they did, but that was not appreciable to us at the moment. It was like the thunder-storm when the explosion follows the flash so rapidly that you have no time for thought. It was flash and crash one after the other, wilder than any storm. It was a storm of human passion, or rather, as Willgood said, of men fighting devils.

"During the moment that our yards were interlocked, the man I have told you of, who set the pirate flag and then ran away from the shots fired at him, managed to jump into our rigging. Well for him that he did, for, as the brig swung clear of us, there was a dull heavy report, low down in her hold, where that hot shot had penetrated and ignited her magazine. This was followed by an uprising of the masts and deck, and in a few minutes afterward by the disappearance of the hull beneath the waves.

"It was the first instance that I ever knew of a whaler turning himself into a man-of-war, and 'an avenger of the seas.' The whole defence was courageous and determined, and most wonderfully successful.

"That single shot was a fatal one, and destroyed a good many lives. A few of the pirates leaped into the sea and were picked up by Timpson and the other mate, the noble fellows in our boats forgetting that these men, floundering and perishing in the water, were part of a crew of wretches who had just fired upon and killed one of their messmates and slightly wounded two others.

"When the brig went down, a sort of round house on deck, which was the captain's cabin, floated off, and was immediately boarded by Timpson, whose boat was nearest. In this he found a great assortment of flags, of almost all nations, and much valuable clothing, arms, books, papers, and various trinkets, and several watches, but best of all, gold enough to divide over a thousand dollars to each man on the Althea, including the widow of the one that was killed, to whose portion the men added the proceeds of half the other property, which we sold at auction: the other half they divided between the wounded men, making their share about three hundred dollars each more than the unhurt members of the crew.

"The men wanted to give me the captain's share, but I insisted upon counting myself only equal to negro Jim, who I declared had done as much as any one in saving our lives and the ship, and for once I wanted to put myself on a par with my men, and share alike with every one on board, including the young fellow who had given us the early warning by signal of what we had to expect if we allowed the ship to be boarded. This he had done at the immediate risk of his life, and with a certainty of death if he should not escape to us, which he intended to do by jumping into the sea, and swimming either to one of our boats or the ship, if it should not be taken. He at once volunteered to take the berth of the man that was killed, and pointed out two others, who, like him, had been trapped on board the pirate, who would gladly take the berths of the two wounded men.

"Taking the two out, we had fifteen prisoners, whom we placed in one of the brig's boats which we picked up, and gave them an old sail for an awning—for you may see that we were in a burning hot latitude—and moored this boat well astern, and kept one man and six guns at the taffrail constantly on guard, for they were a most desperate-looking set of cut-throats, and one who held a sort of lieutenant's office, was so mad at "the traitor," as he called the man who set the flag, that he would have murdered him in a moment if he could have got the chance. We took good care to search every one of these fellows separately before we put them in their prison-boat, and emptied their pockets and belts of knives and everything else but tobacco.

"It was these prisoners that took us into Rio Janerio, where I wrote you a short note, merely to say, all well, but as I was in duty bound to write the owners, I had no time to give you all these particulars, which I hope will be interesting—I am sure what is to follow will be—not about these cut-throats, but about the man who saved our throats from being cut—but first a few more particulars.

"One of the first things after the excitement was a little over and our prisoners secured, was to go and look up the hundred-barrel whale that Timpson had killed, and get that fast on the other side of the ship. Then I let the men rest until the next day, for not one had slept an hour the night before, and some of them were ready to lie down where they stood as soon as the word was given to knock off work.

"As I was fresher than the mates I took the first watch, and headed the ship at once for Rio. When all was still around me I spent an hour in calm meditation and thankfulness to God for this great deliverance from a terrible danger; and I prayed earnestly that we might have mild weather, so that I could tow the boat and its vicious crew, for I should have been really afraid to take the villains on board, as we had no way of securing them. I had given them a good allowance of food and water, but some of them grumbled and swore that it was insufficient, and because I did not let them come on deck to sleep, the officer was particularly turbulent, and kept the men in a disturbed state all the time.

"During the night, which was pretty dark, the guard called to me in a whisper, and when I went to him, said that something wrong was going on, though everything about the boat was perfectly still. It was that stillness that alarmed him. I put my hand upon the tow-line and guessed what was the matter. I looked down along the rope and saw a dark object as I thought between me and the water. One of the dogs was trying to creep up so slily that he could reach and overpower the guard and seize the guns before he would discover the movement. I took up a gun and aimed it toward the dark object and fired. There was a splash, a few low words among the prisoners, and then all was still. In the morning the mischief-making lieutenant was missing. The next night I placed a glaring light on the stern so that every motion in the boat could be seen, and we had no more trouble. That day we finished the first whale, but at night we had another alongside. Our great good luck made the men all happy and they worked heartily. Six days after the capture of the pirate we entered Rio Janerio. I made my formal statement and delivered up our prisoners to the authorities, and left one of my wounded men and one of the volunteers for witnesses, and sailed again with little delay as possible, because I feared my men would get into bad habits in that dissolute place, where every one of them were lionized by all of our countrymen, and some of the Portuguese and Spaniards, on account of our "mucho bueno fight."

"As to myself, I wonder that I did not grow vain, for I was féted by all classes from the royal family down to the smallest sea-captain in port. I did not learn till then what a formidable villain I had destroyed in sending the captain of this gang of desperadoes to the bottom.

"At this point, Scott having paused in his reading, and laid down the papers, Indiana thought that she might be allowed to express her opinion.

"Now, father," she said, with a tone and an air of disappointment, "I like that story very much, but—"

"But what, darling?"

"But father, you have not told me what you said you would—the name of that boy that was lost when my little brother and his mother were on the wreck. I thought you were going to tell me that."

"And so I am. That is in the next story. I thought you would like to stop and rest a few minutes. I am sure I wanted to do so. You hurried me so after supper that I did not have my usual smoke. If you will bring me my pipe and wait till I puff that a little while, I will go on again and finish Captain Bushnell's very interesting letter.

◆

## CHAPTER XXV.

*How came you here in such questionable shape?*

Before we resume Capt. Bushnell's story let us retrospect a little. There was a mere glimpse given the on-lookers of this drama, of one of its characters, while he floated away, as it were, from a light spot, into outer darkness, where he was apparently lost—hopelessly so to all who knew him or the circumstances connected with his apparent death. He seemed to have been swallowed up by the Atlantic's waves, where they lash a Northern shore. Now, ten years later, he will be seen rising mysteriously out of the ocean at the tropics. Then he will disappear again again, to come on the stage when least expected. That is the character that this actor fills. Whether by land or water he will seem to come upon the scene when least expected, yet always when most needed, to be most serviceable to the other *dramatis personæ*.

No one who knew Indiana in her childhood's days, and childhood's ways, could fail to sympathize with her; and I have therefore supposed, that what to her was of such deep interest, must be equally so to the reader. Perhaps I base that opinion upon my own feelings. But she was indeed a lovely child. Well-formed and healthy; of medium size; lithe as a deer; strong and courageous like both her parents; kind, loving, intelligent, benevolent to a fault; ardent in her affections; who could help loving her? Her face was not only beautiful, it was like her mother's, always attractive, because always beaming with intelligence. Her hair was dark and curled in natural ringlets, even after she was full grown. Her dark gray eyes were always bright, and her whole person always neat—Uncle Daniel said, "even when dirty; she had such a neat way of disposing her dress, if it was soiled by play." At ten, she could walk or run, ride or row; sing, talk, or laugh; all and each heartily; and yet no one thought of calling her a romp; because she was always her father's "little lady." But the little lady is probably impatient to hear the rest of Capt. Bushnell's story, so I will drop mine and go on with his.

"Now," said Scott, laying down his pipe and taking up his manuscript: "Now, darling, I am going to tell you something that you have so long desired to know.

"I cannot account for the interest you have always felt in the fate of that boy, who was on the wreck with your little brother, except upon the doctrine of 'sympathetic spiritual affinity,' which those who believe in it say will attract the minds of two persons who never heard of each other, though separated by the wide, wide world. But as you will all prefer 'to hear the remainder of Capt. Bushnell's letter, I will go on with that, and talk philosophy afterward."

"I have yet to tell you, my dear Althea, the most remarkable part of our wonderful adventure.

"Do you remember Luke Weston—the boy that was on the schooner with you, when you were made to suffer a few hours, that I might be happy many, many others? Just as many as I can live to love and remember you.

"Of course you have always supposed, as every other person did, that he perished where he was drifted out to sea, when the schooner upset. I never knew him; I only remembered his name, as well I might, for I had often heard Jim tell the story to the sailors, holding them listening by the hour to the minute incidents of that, to you, well remembered night.

"About the time the man I have mentioned came down upon our deck (which he took care not to do until he saw his deadly enemy, the lieutenant, disposed of), I was moving near the companion-way, intending to go below. At this moment I was startled by a most excited cry from Jim Baker, who was very near and rather behind me. Of course I was alarmed, because the time and circumstances were calculated to produce such an effect. Every thing around us was exciting. Jim was so startled that he jumped several feet, hitting and almost upsetting me down the cabin stairs. I spoke sharply and turned around to question him for his conduct and carelessness. I never saw a more perfect picture of fright. I think he would have looked pale if he could. His teeth chattered and he could hardly speak. Before a hundred armed pirates he was a man. He could laugh as he fired red-hot shot or poured boiling oil upon them. Now brought face to face with a single one upon our own deck, he trembled as a child is supposed to quail before a ghost.

"I certainly was surprised at what I saw, and so was the stranger. He probably did not know at first whether Jim's actions meant hostility or fright. He did not recognize Jim's face, and I have often thought it much more difficult to retain the impression of a negro's face than a white man's, while a negro generally has great power of memory, seeming never to forget a face once well known.

"Of the personal appearance of the stranger there was nothing singular. My first impression, from a glance at his complexion, was, that he might be a mulatto. A second look failed to discover any thing connected with the African race; and then I thought he might be Spanish, or perhaps a native of Brazil, of Portuguese blood. A still further examination indicated to me, before he spoke, that the face, dark as it was, must have had its outlines formed in New-England. His voice convinced me that I was correct in this opinion.

"I said that I spoke sharply to Jim, and as I did so I turned around and saw him and the object of his fright standing but a few feet apart, looking intently at each other; the black man in the full faith that he saw the ghost of a person once known, but who for years he had been fully convinced was dead; and the white man with some strange reminiscences creeping into his mind that he had seen the face of the black man, but where, whether on land or sea, in Africa or America, was more than he could recollect.

"I said: 'What ails you, Jim? Don't you see that this man is not disposed to hurt you? The muzzles of his pistols are toward himself? Why do you stare at him in this way?' He answered:

"'Dat am him, Massa Jock, sure as death. Spec' he am come right up out ob de sea, when dem odder fellows went down.'

"Jim had not seen how this man got aboard. Indeed, I had forgotten him myself, after he had made the leap into our rigging, until I now saw him on deck; and I only remembered him from the peculiarity of his garb. He was dressed in the same half-uniform of all the pirate crew; but in addition, he had twisted a small American flag around his middle. I had noticed this when looking at him through my glass, while he was in the top of the brig. I certainly did not see any thing about him to fear, as he was, if a cut-throat, a very mild-mannered one. It is true, he was fully armed with knives and pistols, the latter of which he held with their buts toward me, as though he designed to surrender them into my hands, or any other person who would relieve him of articles now quite useless.

"In reply to Jim's remark about the man being some 'him' that he recognized, I said:

"'Well, if you know the man, why don't you say so? Have you lost your senses, Jim Baker.'

"The man started at the sound of that name, and touched his cap respectfully to me, and said:

"'Excuse me, Captain; I came to surrender my arms, and tell you who and what I am. Here is the flag of my country; I am not a pirate. If this darkey is Jim Baker of old Saybrook, Connecticut, I do not wonder that he supposes I come from the bottom of the sea, for there is where he saw me bound, when we parted last. Jim, my old friend, (offering his hand), this is real flesh and blood, and no ghost; I am Luke Weston.'

"'Oh Lord, gora mighty, man! It am unpossible! Must feel and see if it am real flesh.'

"'Yes, Jim, and what do you think of this? Here is your own mark—L-u-k-e, nicely printed on my right arm. Do you remember that my old fellow?'

"''Deed I do. Dare am no mistake, Massa Jock—should say, I 'spose, Cap'n Bushnell, but can't always think on him.'

"'Bushnell; of Saybrook? And whose father, Captain Jonathan Bushnell, sailed the 'Two Sisters' from Middletown, with staves and horses to Trinidad? Then my father and he often sailed together.'

"'And you were named after your father? And you went with him on his and my father's last voyage, only a year before the Abel was upset? Yes. Then I think there is no mistake in your identity. Come below with me a minute, I want a word with you about these fellows as well as yourself.'

"In a few minutes he told me briefly the part he had played, and that he would gladly serve on board the Althea, and told also of the other two men that I might trust; and promising to give me his whole history as soon as I had leisure to listen to it. I dismissed and sent him forward to take the berth of the poor fellow that was killed, and under instructions from Jim to go right to work.

"In the mean time Jim had passed the word who the stranger was, and as the crew had all heard his story, when he came on deck, he found himself quite a lion. Willgood, too, had helped the matter on, by telling the men how this sailor had risked his own life to save others, and as he was really a fine-looking, athletic young fellow, who could hold his own oar, he was at once adopted into the fraternity of whalemen.

"When he shoved up his sleeve to show the name that Jim had pricked into the arm with India ink, I saw at once that he was neither African nor Spanish. He had a pure white, delicate skin. His hair was very dark and curly, his eyes dark and keen; his teeth looked as though he could sever a half-inch rope; and his handsome face was the picture of health. In short, my dear, although the Althea's crew pride itself upon its good looks, in the aggregate, Luke Weston, individually, was the handsomest man in the ship, and before a month had passed, was the most universal favorite, owing to his ever pleasant good-nature and general intelligence, and readiness to impart it to his messmates. I certainly shall ask his promotion to a mate's berth, if we both live to return safely.

"That night after our battle, as I told you, I took the first watch, and Luke, who said he 'was all right,' volunteered in place of one of the men who was out during the previous one with Simpson, and had taken a severe cold. Jim was always on deck in my watch, and so after we had got every thing all snug for the night, which was clear and with only wind enough to keep us on steering-way, we sat down near the helmsman, and guard, and two or three others that I had allowed to come aft, to listen to Luke's story, which was only interrupted by the incident that I have already related, when my duty compelled me to send a fellow creature, who was as unfit to die as he was to live, to a Judge before whom violent conduct would not avail.

"'You remember, Jim,' said Luke, 'that I was a pretty rough boy, ten years ago, having been, for one of my years—for I am only twenty-one now—in a good deal of rough company. I think that I needed just such a lesson as I got the night the Abel capsized. I remember well how I went ashore at the Point with the captain and mate, both old topers of the hardest sort, who urged me to drink 'black-strap,' until I was about as drunk as they were. It was cool that day, and I wore one of my father's old coats, and fortunate for me that I did, for I believe it saved my life. It was one of those great coarse shaggy things, in which a man could lie down and sleep on deck and be comfortably warm. While I was ashore, the mate in his drunken folly, said he was going to victual me for a sea-voyage. He little thought how literally true his words were, while stuffing the great pockets of my coat with hard bread and cheese, and Bologna sausage, and a black bottle of water—he thought it was rum.

"When I got aboard, I tumbled into the berth to sleep off my drunken fit, with my coat on, and all its contents. I only awakened when thrown over by the capsizing of the vessel, and got out barely in time to light upon a small raft of boards that fell off the deck load. It was a singular, and to me a fortunate circumstance, that this portion of the load of lumber was put on board in such a shape, to serve the purpose by a remarkable sequence of events, of making me the instrument of your rescue from a much worse fate than mine would have been if drowned at once, or lost upon my raft at sea.

"This raft was composed of ninety-six boards, eight feet long, lashed together in what raftsmen call a crib, and it came aboard exactly as it was rafted, through sport of those who were loading the timber. It had been landed in high water on the wharf, intact as it floated down the Connecticut. After the rest of the load was on deck the men shoved on this crib, and thus it was the first to go off; and I was next, and more by good luck than good sense, I lighted fairly on top, for I was barely awake when I floated away into the darkness, out of sight and hearing. Then I began to realize my dreadful situation: alone, afloat on a raft, drifting out to sea, where I must eventually perish of famine and exposure, if not by being pitched off my frail support and drowned.

"I realized in its fullest force that this was the fruits of rum drinking; and I made a resolution, which I have kept to this day, that not another drop should even touch my lips. I took hold of the bottle in my pocket to throw it away, because, as I thought, it contained rum. I was restrained from doing so by some guardian angel, and laid it down upon the raft.

"The next day I was nearly famished with thirst—a drunkard's thirst, but would not touch the bottle. I wrote a few words with a pencil on a scrap of paper, telling what had become of me, and was going to cork it in the bottle and set that adrift, tied upon one of the boards, with a piece of my shirt for a signal, in hopes it might be seen and picked up, or drift ashore and be found.

"When I drew the cork to pour out the rum, I discovered before I wasted a drop that it was water—precious, blessed water. I took only a little drink, for I was covetous of my treasure, and with it in my hand, I knelt down and repeated a thanksgiving prayer, taught me by my pious mother, years before, and which for some time I had not thought of; yet the words all came back, fresh and sweet as though the good seed had been sown only yesterday.

"What a blessed thing it is for a boy to have a good mother! You, I dare say, Capt. Bushnell, can realize this truth, and something of my feelings of thankfulness.

"Until I discovered the water I had eaten nothing, my throat was so parched and inflamed by the rum I drank the day before. The water gave me an appetite, but knowing the limit of my supply, I ate sparingly, though with great enjoyment.

"I had during the night frequently seen the lights of vessels, but all were far away; and by the bearing of the light-houses I could make out that I was drifting directly out to sea, and should not, as I hoped, touch upon Long Island.

"The next day I saw several vessels, but no one saw me. I also saw the land upon both sides, and at one time was so near Block Island that I had very strong hopes of striking it, or of being seen by the light-house keeper; but when night came on I saw how very, very frail were all my grounds of hope.

"I had no hope but that of a bare possibility of falling in the track of some vessel inward or outward bound, to the port of New-York, or some other on Long Island Sound, and I knew that this was indeed a 'forlorn hope.' Still I did hope and pray, and I believe those long hours upon that raft were the best spent of all my life.

"When I finally gave up all thoughts of touching shore, I lay down and slept, and I have never been able to tell how long, whether only a few hours or twenty-four. I was wakened by a heavy shock, as though I had struck upon a rock, and I looked up at a great black mass overhanging my raft. The next thing I saw, or rather felt, as it dragged over me, was a wet rope, which I seized instinctively and made fast to one of the withes that held the boards together. By this time I began to realize that I had struck a large ship, and I hoped the rope I had seized upon was well fastened at the other end, as I could not expect to make myself heard, and should not be seen till daylight.

"Presently I heard a stir on board. Then voices on deck. An officer had come up from below and was inquiring, as I learned afterward, the meaning of that thumping under the quarter.

"He said it sounded like a boat alongside, which he could hear distinctly in his cabin. Then he came and looked over the side, and inquired with an oath, which I could hear, what that fender-line was dragging overboard for; and ordered a man very roughly to take it in. I should have called out now, but I was afraid. The man took hold of the rope and pulled, but of course he could not get it aboard; it was too fast to my raft.

"'Man a boat, then, and down and see what's the matter. It has probably dragged round and fouled the rudder. It must be cleared away, any how. Bear a hand you lubbers, here first, and see if you can pull it aboard.'

"Five or six men laid hold and pulled, and I held on to the knot at the other end, for fear it might give way. They reported that it was fast to something that moved slowly in the water.

"When it was up midships, the officer called for a light, and at the same time I sung out, 'Ship ahoy!' at which the men shouted, 'somebody overboard, Sir.'

"The officer looked down and hailed:

"'What the devil are you doing down there, you lubber? How came you overboard? I have a good will to cut the line and let you go adrift to the sharks.'

"'With this he mixed in such a string of oaths that I almost feared he would execute his wicked threat. But I took comfort in hearing the boat run down from the davits, for I thought I could make some one in that hear me, and should thus be saved, if I was sent adrift.

"However, the boat was soon alongside of the raft, and I was aboard, and the men pulled around to the starboard gangway, where there was a ladder, up which I went with one of the men, while the other two dropped the boat astern to be hauled up to its place. The officer met the man as he came up with this inquiry:

"'Who is this lousy lubber, Tom; and how came he overboard?'

"'It is not one of our men, if you please, Sir. Here he is. He can speak for himself.'

"'Not one of our men! Then I should like to know who he is, and where he came from? How is it? Are you the chap? Why, Tom, he is only a chunk of a boy in an old man's coat—probably one of Davy Jones's.'

"'If you please, Sir,' I said, imitating Tom in his deference to the rough brute: 'I am only a boy, in my father's coat. An honest boy, Sir, of an honest father; and I came on a raft accidentally afoul of your ship. I have been shipwrecked by the upsetting of the vessel I was on, near the mouth of the Connecticut River; and I have drifted out to sea, and struck you while I was asleep; and finding a rope I made fast. I hope I have done no harm.'

"'A smart Yankee, 'pon my word, Tom. Does he tell the truth? Was he on a raft?'

"'Yes, sir. What shall I do with it and him?'

"'Send it adrift, of course. Say, what sort of timber is it? Something that will do for firewood?'

"'Better than that, Sir,' I said. 'There's nearly a hundred good, new, clear pine boards.'

"'Well, then, keep it in tow till daylight, and we'll have it aboard. I have use for the article. Take this boy below and let him eat, and sleep till morning, and I will then see what he looks like.'

"In the morning I had to repeat my story to the captain, and as it was found to hang together well, it was concluded that I was a fit candidate for enlistment into this honorable fraternity of slavers, for that I found was the character of my company. The ship, misnamed the Quaker, was on a voyage to Africa, for a cargo of slaves, which were to be bought with powder and rum, and worthless trinkets, and taken to Brazil and sold for gold, in the same way that we take horses and staves from Connecticut to the West Indies.

"As I could not help myself, I consented to sign the shipping articles, and was assigned to duty. I think that crew, from captain to cook, was the roughest one I ever met with. The pirate crew compared with it were gentlemen. Indeed a good many of those on the brig were more like gentlemen in their manners than you could imagine possible for men engaged in such business. The pirate captain was a very mild-mannered, quiet man. The only real coarse officer is the brute you have got in the boat, and he, I venture to say, will make trouble for you, if his companions don't throw him overboard, which I am sure some of the crew would do if they were here. I don't know that any of his present company will, for I think they are some of the very scurviest dogs in the pack

"It is a little curious that at this point in Luke's story, when he had only a minute before spoken of this dangerous, troublesome character, that the scene occurred which I have mentioned, that brought that desperate man to the end of his wicked career.

"After the excitement of that alarm was over, Luke resumed his story.

"But to return to the slaver. I believe the extreme wickedness of the company I had been thus thrown among, without any agency on my part, was one of God's good providences to me, for it acted upon my mind exactly contrary to what it would if I had voluntarily entered the ship, a week previous. I resolved and grew determined every day in my resolve, that if I lived to escape from this crew, I never would be like one of them.

"The scenes I witnessed on the slave coast made me almost wish I had not met with this ship. I thought death at sea, upon my raft, preferable to such a life of wickedness. The slaves were treated exactly like brutes. Men and women were entirely naked, and no attempts were made to keep them separate. One company of about twenty girls, from ten to twenty-five years old, looked as though they might be all children of one father, and he a white man, who had reared them to sell. Some of the mothers, too, must have been quite light-colored. These girls were partially dressed and wore earrings and other ornaments. It is possible that it was a whole family which had been stolen. Out of this lot every officer in the ship chose a *compagne du voyage*, and some of the men were not restrained from the same practice.

"The stowing of this cargo of slaves was inhuman beyond conception. The depth between decks was eight feet. This was divided by two false decks, so that each space was only two and a half feet high. The slaves were placed upon these decks in tiers, the first one sitting with his back against the side of the ship, with his legs apart, and another between them, and so on to midships, and then reversed. They ate and slept in this position, being allowed to come on deck, one mess at a time, once a day, very much as a farmer lets out his cattle to clean his stable.

"We had one storm in which none were allowed to come up for two days, and they could not be fed during the same period. When the storm abated and the hatches were opened, a fog of sickening stench came up like smoke from a furnace. Seventy dead bodies were dragged out and cast into the sea as carelessly as dead dogs would have been.

"At this time nearly the whole company were brought up, and a more horrid sight I never saw. A large tank of sea-water was placed on deck, and the dirty creatures were compelled to get in and scrub each other with brooms and brushes, and also to wash out their lair, and then the ship was fumigated so as to make it a little less likely to breed contagion.

"Before we landed, after reaching Brazil, there was another general cleaning, and the false decks were torn down and thrown overboard, and the ship thoroughly purified. Then the slaves were taken ashore and put into a corral, where there was a running stream, in which they were required to wash every day, and out of which they took their drinking water. Here the men and women were separated, and the women given a sort of short calico shirt or gown, and the men, each a yard of cloth around the loins. When this was done, and after a few days feeding, the pens were opened for sale of the stock. A lot of the best looking females were kept on board, where those who bought large lots came to make payment, and sometimes to purchase, and sometimes to receive a present of 'a likely mulatto girl.'

"Upon one of these occasions a planter from a long way up the country, who had purchased over two hundred men and women, was told to take his choice of the girls, as a present. He replied in Portuguese, which I only understood by the answer, that he would prefer to take me.'

"I was then pretty swarthy, and perhaps the man really thought I was an African.

"The captain replied: 'No, he must sell me.'

"'Then what would he take?'

"'A hundred doubloons.'

"It was an enormous price, but I suppose the buyer thought he would average it upon the whole lot, and one of the girls that he got as a present, and so in less time than it takes to tell it, that villain of a captain had actually sold me as a slave, and pocketed twice as much money as for any two in the cargo.

"If you wonder that I did not cry out against this outrage, pray think what should I have gained? I was a slave on board with no chance to escape, which I thought I might have, if once on shore. So I followed my new master meekly to his house in the city, and through the single entrance into an enclosure, with all of his purchases, quadruped and inanimate, where the caravan was to be arranged for its long journey toward the mountains.

"A hundred mules were to be packed with merchandise, and provisions for two hundred new slaves, besides dozens of old ones, some of whom acted as drivers of the great human team; others of mules, and others as superintendents of the merchandise, or waiters upon the owner of all this property, who was assisted by a head man, and two others whom I took to be his own sons by a black woman.

"The slaves were all herded like cattle in one enclosure, and as far as the assortment would go, they were coupled in pairs, a man being attached by his left hand to the right hand of a woman. This was their marriage ceremony, for thus they were to march, and when they reached their destination, the pair were to occupy the same hut together.

"As I was dressed in my sailor costume, I was not turned into the slave-pen with the others, but was left in the outer enclosure among the mules and merchandise, where I watched all the proceedings, and at the same time kept an eye to the gate, in hopes that the black cerberus would be off his guard long enough to allow me an opportunity to pass through and escape, as I intended to do, and make my way to the American consul, or on board some American or English vessel. I even feared to undertake this, lest I might be kidnapped and again taken on board The Quaker, for another voyage to Africa; and I did not know whether I could find the consul, as every body spoke Portuguese, and I only my native tongue, and a little Spanish that I had picked up, partly on board of the slaver, and partly in my West India trips.

"You must remember that I was only a boy, in a strange place, and among people speaking an unknown tongue, all of whom I looked upon as willing to enslave any one of their fellow creatures who might fall unprotected into their hands. In my case I had actually been sold as a slave, and who would question the right of my master to hold what he had purchased, or how should I prove that the slave captain had no right to make the sale? He had got the money, and the purchaser had got me, and that seemed to be the end of the law.

"All this I reasoned upon, as I sat on a bale of goods; yet I should have tried to escape if I could see an opportunity. As I could not, I sat and waited for events, patiently, as I did while on my raft.

"By-and-by one of those young men whom I took for sons, happened to see me, and uttered an exclamation that I afterward learned was that of surprise at having discovered me here, as I had been looked for among the slaves, and not being found, it was supposed I had escaped. He addressed me in Portuguese, and I answered as well as I could in Spanish. We understood each other about equally well, and quite as well as I did him when he spoke French and Dutch. I was at once satisfied from his manner and effort to speak with me in some European language, that he knew I was not an African; and probably that knowledge made me feel more independent, and had something to do in shaping my subsequent actions.

"Finding I could not understand any of his jargon, I said impatiently, speaking to myself: 'Confound the fellow, I can not understand a word of his lingo.'

"To this he instantly replied: 'Sacre dam; why no you say English at first? What you are, ha? English padre—yellow mother? How you come slave?

"I replied indignantly, for he had roused my Yankee blood. I was no longer a coward.

"'I am *no slave!* I am *not* English, nor is my mother a 'yellow woman! My parents are both white, and I am an American, and free. I will not be a slave. Let me out of this prison or I will murder you!'

"'Hilo! Mertun—Salmo! Where are you? Come here and tie up this young savage. American, he calls himself. Yankee, I 'spose; only fit for slave. Good for nothing else. There, tie him fast.'

"This he said as three strong-armed men seized and bound me, hand and foot. Then he continued:

"'You'll murder me, will you? Come try it, my young fighting cock. And if you give me another saucy word I will order Salmo to give you a hundred cuts on the bare back. And I will do it if you ever tell me you are no slave. Didn't my father buy you and pay more money twice over, than the best negro in the lot is worth, only because I wanted a good-looking, light-colored young fellow, to serve me. And now, you rascal, I want you to know that it is death for any slave to threaten to kill his master. I have only to denounce you, and the judge will have you strung up in an hour. And I will do it if you don't behave. Do you hear?'

"I did hear and understand every word, though not spoken as plainly as I tell it now, and I thought over every word I heard and counted its full force. I saw that I was doomed, and that it was useless for me to struggle. I was only in the condition of each of the poor negroes that I had, although unwillingly, aided in enslaving. And because I was helpless and alone, with no one to plead for me, the villain who had stolen, starved, and maltreated those poor blacks, had sold me precisely as he did them, and by no more right in the one case than in the other.

"Perhaps that whole family of half-breed girls for whom I had felt so much sympathy had been sacrificed quite as cruelly as myself. Even now some of them were pining in the next inclosure, shackled to negro men whom they loathed; making them doubly slaves—first to him who claimed ownership over their bodies; and second, to the men with whom they had been forcibly coupled, for the vile purpose of breeding more slaves.

"What can I do?" I said to myself. "I cannot escape now; I must make a virtue of necessity, and submit until I can find an opportunity." I had often heard my father and mother, and our good old minister Lathrop talk about the great wickedness of slavery, but as I then saw slaves all around me, who were as well off as I was, I could not see the wickedness as they did. I saw it now.

"After leaving me about an hour to my reflections, and the pain of the whip-cord, cutting into my wrists and ankles, my young tyrant came again to talk with me. I think he saw that he had different material from the African to work upon, and was disposed to see whether he could not make a better servant out of me by words than blows. Besides, I had cost too much to throw away foolishly. So he said in his broken English,

"'Are you stubborn yet? Do you want to kill me?'

"No, I will not touch you, if you let me loose, and I won't talk with you if you keep me tied.

"'Well, then, get up. Why the rascal did tie you tight.'

"This he said as he cut the cords with his dagger, and saw how cruelly they had cut into the skin and caused my legs and arms to swell.

"Now," I said, "I will talk with you and tell you the truth. If you treat me well I will be good and mind you, and do the best I can. I am in your power, but I will not be called a slave, though I will serve you as one. If you whip me or abuse me again as you have now, I will kill you and burn your house. You or your friends can only kill me, and for that I do not care. If you starve me I will steal. What do I care for your whips and ropes and daggers? Give me clothes and food, and I will repay you honestly. Trust me and then if I fail, you may whip me or kill me; but while I keep this promise, treat me well and call me by my name, but don't call me slave. Now, try me.

"'Agreed. What is your name? Luke, ah, well, you are to go with me—to live in the house with me, and wait on me and learn to read to me and write for me.'

"I can do that now.

"'Can you read in English books—yes? And write English? Bravo! I will learn English. I have plenty of books. And will you learn Portuguese—yes? And you will be good? I shall not have to whip you? Well, come along then. You shall have plenty to eat and good clothes. But remember Salmo and his rope, and that I can have you hung when you are bad. Will you be good?'

"Yes, honestly, I will. Try me.

"'I will. Come with me.'

"It was thus, that by a sort of treaty between two boys, for he was not over eighteen, that I became his slave; a position that no amount of beating could have reduced me to; for in the mood I was then in, I would have done some desperate act that would have induced my masters to kill me. It was not that my position could be worse than it was on board of that slaver, as a servant to its wicked captain; but it was the idea of being called a slave. This my nature revolted at, until I was ready to fight for the liberty of dying.

"I was willing to say 'master,' but he should not say 'slave.' I could quite as easily say 'Master Alphonse,' as Mister Alphonse; and so I continued to address him; while he called me Luke, and from this time forward we never had another quarrel.

"Before the first year was over I had become so indispensable to my new master that ten times the sum paid by his father would have been no temptation to part with me.

"For a boy of my age and condition in life, I had received a good education. At least it was good compared with none. I could read distinctly, and had mastered the rudiments of grammar and arithmetic. My penmanship was that of a school-boy, but it passed muster with Alphonse, who was really delighted with my acquirements. In composition my ideas were very crude, but even that fault was invisible to one who knew nothing of the language, except how to speak it so as to converse understandingly.

"It had been the intention of my master to make a body-servant of me; but when he said 'come,' I went with him to his apartment, and he put an English paper into my hands and told me to read, to see whether I had told the truth or not.

"It was at this time that a most intense anxiety was felt in Brazil about Portugal, and about the King leaving that part of the kingdom for this, and it was the English editor's views upon this subject that I commenced reading. I had only read a few lines when he stopped me to inquire if I was really reading or making up a story; he appeared much excited by what I read, and quite delighted to think that he could now get the news through me, as he was not able to read so as to understand English, though he did when spoken. I found that he had been a voyage to England, during which he had picked up a little of the language, and learned to hate 'the Yankees,' and an English friend had sent him papers regularly since his return. It was in consequence of my ability to read that he changed his views about me, and placed me more on the footing of a companion than a servant; though of course I was still considered a menial, and counted as a slave, but one of great value, and therefore better treated than one that could be easily replaced.

"The father could not understand a word of English, but Alphonse translated all I had read, so as to give him the points of the news, greatly to his delight, and I had to read all that was said about Portugal; or the war with France, and the King; in a large bundle of English papers, day after day; and as I read, Alphonse told his story sentence by sentence to his father and brothers, and several other persons who came to listen to the English news; some of it six months old. No matter, it made me a hero, and improved my condition, though it lessened my opportunity to escape.

"There was but one entrance to the house, and that was the gate into the court, through which men and beasts passed, and it was closely guarded during the week we remained.

"My rough sailor-clothes were taken off, and I was furnished a suit not unlike my master's—indeed I think it belonged to one of his brothers, younger than himself.

"I was required to sleep among the boxes and bales inside the room, while Alphonse slept in a hammock in front of the door under a veranda. I found that, young as was this hopeful heir of a great Brazilian slaveholder, he had already selected one of the mulatto girls I have mentioned, and lodged her in the same room where I slept; and we, both equally considered slaves, were for years treated much alike; that is to all we needed of food and clothing, with little to do but minister to the fancied wants of this young aristocrat.

"He named her Nepo; why or what its meaning I can not tell, unless it was because it was short and easily spoken. Between Nepo and me a lasting friendship naturally grew up, and continued uninterrupted till I escaped.

"When we left Rio, we two were mounted upon one mule, and there were nearly a hundred others loaded with merchandise, or carrying other members of the family. The slaves, coupled together, were driven like cattle by mounted drivers, who kept them moving with long whips, which often fell upon the naked backs of the poor wretches, with such force that the blood trickled to their heels.

"We were about a month on the road, or rather on the journey, for there was no path visible a great portion of the way before we reached the plantation, which was a great cattle estate.

These slaves, however, had not been purchased for this place, but to work gold mines, still higher up the country; about which there was a great excitement, and such a demand for slaves, that their value had doubled within a few months.

"After getting settled in my new home at Araguava, which is on the river Tiete, about four hundred miles from Rio Janeiro, in a mountainous, healthy region, I set myself diligently to work to learn the Portuguese language; in which I was assisted by my master, while I aided him equally as much in his study of English; and at the same time I taught both languages to Nepo.

"Fancy a twelve-year-old Yankee boy, in the far interior of Brazil, acting the schoolmaster to pupils far older than himself. But what can't a Yankee boy do if he wills it? It was my will while I benefited others, to benefit myself. I found a lot of Enlish books which had been purchased for my master to pursue his studies of the language, and to these I devoted all my leisure hours; and often shaped my reading to Alphonse, as much to my own, as to his improvement. I also practiced writing and learned to keep accounts.

"I had no use for money, but I took care to save every piece that fell into my hands, as a provision for any opportunity that might offer for me to escape.

"A caravan was fitted out every year for Rio Janerio, but I could find no way of accompanying it until at last my master concluded to make another trip to the city to buy more slaves, as the gold-mining had been profitable, notwithstanding the great waste of human life. But what did the proprietors care? When one slave, died another could be purchased.

"During all my term of slavery, I had been careful never to express a wish to return to my own country, and this had thrown my master off his guard. It is true, I could have escaped from him at any time, but I did not think it safe for me to risk the chance of reaching the coast, and there finding a vessel by which I could get out of the country.

"It was the intention of the father and son to go together; but just as they were ready to start the old man was thrown from his horse and broke a leg. He was unwilling that his son should undertake so much business by himself, and then Alphonse proposed to take me along as an assistant.

"'But what if he runs away? Are you not afraid of that?'

"'Nonsense! Afraid, no. He never will leave me. I have never heard him express a wish to do so. He is entirely contented.'

"This conversation Alphonse repeated to me, and then said: 'Was I correct?'

"I answered, 'certainly.'

"'Then you will go to Rio and not leave me?'

"'I will,' I promptly answered. 'I pledge you my word, that I will go with you to the city, and do all you wish me to do there, without offering to leave you, any more than I have here. Why should I?'

"I gave this parole freely and with the determination to keep it; but you will observe that I gave no pledge to return, nor did I intend to—alive. My body, its pretended owners could bring back if they liked; its proud American spirit would never return to slavery.

"My master did not observe this reservation, and did not suppose I had any intention of leaving him. 'Why should I?' That question was as far as he could see into the soul of his slave. Why should one who had never felt the horrors of the condition that many of his fellow beings endured; toiling, starving, dying; why should he desire to be free? Simply because he was born so, and had attended a New-England school, and heard the tenets of the religion of his native land expounded by a man who always denounced Slavery as the sum of all human wickedness; and more than all, because that poor enslaved boy had a pious, Christian mother.

"What would I give to know that she is still alive! I am sure that she mourns me as dead.

"But to return. Alphonse's father gave him a sort of commission, something in this form: 'I, Sebastiano del Barriere, de Araguava, certify that the bearer, my son Alphonse, and his servant Luke, go to Rio Janeiro upon my business, and are empowered to use my name in the purchase of merchandise and slaves, and to transport the same to my plantation. Magistrates and others will give due respect to this certificate, that they may travel without hindrance, etc.'

"This paper, as well as other valuables was all the time within my reach on the journey, and I must own that I was sorely tempted to induce or compel Alphonse to accompany me to some port on the coast, and there change characters with him; as I was much the whitest, and would have passed for the master easier than for the slave; but I was bound by my parole, and went on to Rio. We hired the same premises held when I was first initiated into my life of slavery, and there we gathered another similar assortment of mules and merchandise. While there I secured that paper, in case I ever should need it. At the end of three weeks we set out on our homeward journey.

"I was now under no restraint; my parole was canceled; and so I went on three days, until I knew that Alphonse, nor any one of his men that he dared to trust, could be spared to return to Rio; and then I left upon one of the best mules in the caravan; riding all night, and hiding all day, and entered the city early in the next evening. I went directly to a mule dealer, and told him I was a gentleman's son, going to Europe, and wanted to sell my mule. I then visited a clothing shop and bought a sailor's out-fit, which I took down upon the wharf, where I put it on in a dark place, and then threw my own clothes into the sea, so as not to leave any trace behind, if I should be looked after. I do not think that my late master would have recognized me now, if he had met me upon the street.

"Sauntering into some drinking shops, I pretty soon overheard the mate of a vessel talking with the keeper of the place, that he must have one more man; as they were ready to sail, but could not in consequence of losing three men; but if he could get one they would not wait another day.

"This exactly suited me; I did not care where, so they sailed immediately, and I therefore said rather carelessly, 'Where do you want a man for?' He answered, 'Lisbon,' to which I replied: 'Oh, thought perhaps it was England. I have been there and would not mind going there again.' He directly said, that if I wanted to go to England, come with him at once, and he would pay me full wages for the voyage and give me, as a bonus, a free passage from Lisbon to London. I then asked him if he was the captain, as I wanted the highest authority for such a bargain. I did not tell him that I would gladly go and work my passage, because I saw that I could do better. He then proposed that I should go on board the brig at once and see the captain, who would confirm all that he had promised.

"There was one little difficulty in getting on board at this time of night, as I had no protection papers, and the mate could not vouch for me as one of his men. But I told him how I could obviate all that difficulty, as in fact I was not a sailor, though I had been to sea, and understood the duty. I then showed him old Sebastiano's passport, which had already been examined and vised by several magistrates, and looked very official.

"'Oh, ho, says he, I see how it is. You want to get off, and say nothing to the old man; and you would like to go to England after some petticoat, I'll bet my life on that. Come along, then; I will help you through.'

"When we came to the guard, on our way to the boat, the mate walked up boldly and pointing to me, said, 'Here is Senhor Alphonse Sebastiano, going on board upon business with el capitano;' and at the same time I flourished the document before the officer's eyes, to prove my identity, and dropped a piece of silver into his hand to drink my good health, and that opened the way smoothly.

"The captain readily agreed to the terms, and was anxious to get under way immediately, but I told him I must have a few articles of necessity for such a voyage, but he was afraid that if I went ashore, I might not be able to get aboard again so easily, even if I did not change my mind. It ended in my giving some money to the mate, with a list of what I wanted, and he went ashore while I gladly remained on board.

"In two hours he returned, and we dropped down to the fort, which we could not pass until daylight, when an officer came off and mustered the crew to answer to their names and to see that no one was leaving the city without proper authority. The mate whispered to me, 'Answer to the name of Gomez, his description just suits you.' I did so, passing unquestioned, and as that was the name of one of the men who had deserted, I stood upon the shipping list as Gomez, and was known among the crew by that name only.

"The second day from Rio, as we sailed up the coast, we observed a small schooner coming out from the land, and as she approached, made the Government signal that she wanted to speak the brig, which was at once hove to, to allow the schooner to come up.

"When near enough, we were hailed to know 'if that was the El Contra,' and being answered 'aye, aye,' we were told that the schooner had government dispatches to put on board, and as it was nearly calm, if we would lie still, she would run right along side and put them in the captain's hands, get the receipt, and ask the officers to take a glass of wine on the schooner.

"This was all done according to programme. A formidable looking packet, with several great red seals was delivered, and the captain and mates, and two or three gentlemen passengers, went down upon the schooner, and into the cabin, and that was the last we saw of them; for no sooner was that accomplished than the schooner's hatches flew off, and a stream of armed ruffians poured out, reminding me of a nest of hornets, such as I have often, in my boyhood, stirred with a stone or a long pole.

"In one minute this swarm of rough villains were all over the brig, and like the hornets, as ready to sting if disturbed.

"Resistance would have been as useless now, as in case of those stinging insects. Besides, we had no leader. Our officers were already imprisoned in the schooner's cabin. We could neither run nor fight. We soon found, too, that we had traitors in our own crew, several of whom belonged to the pirates. They had joined the brig on purpose to betray her. So had the three men who had deserted from our vessel, and were among those on the schooner. They had simply acted as spies on the brig, so as to be able to identify her at sea. The object of the pirates in taking this vessel, was to obtain a quantity of gold dust, which, although put on board with great secresy, had been discovered by some of the spies.

"As soon as the brig was in possession of the pirates, they commenced transferring articles from the schooner, including three guns, and the powder which proved their destruction. The guns could not be used upon you, because they were not mounted, since the rascals did not intend to keep the brig, which was old and slow. They intended to secure the gold, and use the vessel long enough to get possession of a better ship, which they planned to do by strategy instead of fighting.

"That luxurious little cabin of the captain's was hoisted from the schooner's deck, and probably would have been to this ship, if the occupant had obtained the easy possession that he expected.

"When the pirates had taken all they wanted from the schooner, the brig's crew were mustered to put on board. The captain's eye happened to light upon me, and perhaps he saw that I was not very anxious to go, for I was at that moment calculating the chances of falling into the hands of my old master. Then the captain called me aft and asked me several questions in Spanish, Portuguese, and English, and if I could read and write, which I answered in the affirmative; and thereupon he called to his lieutenant and told him that 'he wanted this chap;' and that was all the bargain that he deigned to make. So I was still a slave, and this time to a pirate, with a fair chance of getting hung, either by them, or for being caught with them. From that fate you have saved me

"The mate wanted more sailors, and he selected five from our crew, and the rest were bid to steer for shore in the schooner.

"As soon as the pirates got well established on board the brig, they commenced their search for the gold, but I believe it had not been found when she went to the bottom. They did find the liquors, and some of them got beastly drunk about the time they discovered your ship.

"The captain installed me at once as his private secretary, mildly hinting that if I played false in any one particular, he should blow my brains out. Under these circumstances, I thought it best for me to pursue the same policy that I had for nearly ten years, and thus in the two weeks that I was with him, completely won his confidence. It was thus that I alone was entrusted with the signals. It was the lieutenant that fired at me, for setting the real pirate emblem, which put you on your guard and prevented them from taking you by surprise. I knew I risked my life, but who would not for that dear old flag?

"As soon as I saw the stars and stripes, and the general appearance of the ship, I knew it was American, and its crew my countrymen; and I said to myself, 'I will save them if possible, though in doing so I may lose my own life. Better, I thought, to die so, than be hung as a pirate.

"Now you have my story. It is long; but I could have made it much longer; for my life has been full of incidents, such as are usually interesting. This is enough for now. Perhaps in some of our long watches, before we return to America, it may amuse you to hear more. When there is an opportunity, now that I am safe on board of an American ship, I want to write to my mother, and tell her that I still live, and if I continue to do so, I will return and make her old age comfortable and happy, to repay the great debt I owe her."

"There," said Scott, as he finished the manuscript, "isn't that a romantic story, with a live hero, but no love scenes. How do you like it, Indiana? and what do you think of the boy that you have so often heard about, that was lost from the wreck? You know his name now."

"Yes, father, and I shall always remember it, as long as I live; it is such a good story. I do wish now that I could see Luke Weston I think I would rather see him than anybody I know."

"Why, my darling, you do not know him?"

"Oh yes, I do; I should almost recognize as soon as I saw him; and I would love him too, because he is going to be a good boy to his mother. When he comes home with Captain Bushnell, I wish you would go with me to see him; will you, father?"

"Well, perhaps so; as I have promised to take you to see your brother some day. You can go to bed now and see what you will dream about wrecks and rafts, slave-ships, whales, and pirates. Good-night."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

**Will you listen, my story is wild, but not long ?**

"'Sympathetic spiritual affinity,' is not, perhaps, to most of my readers, a very attractive opening to a new chapter, at this stage of the history of characters, in whom I must presume those readers have become interested.

Yet I desire to say a word here, in allusion to what Scott referred to in the opening of a preceding chapter.

The belief in such affinity, by many sensible, honest persons, can not be doubted. It was less common fifty years ago, than now, but it did exist; and who shall say it did not influence human thoughts and actions ?

I have never been able to account satisfactorily to my own mind, nor have I ever met with an individual, who, by his conversation or writings, could give me any better satisfaction, about the cause of the peculiar influence that one human being has upon another's mind. Here, for instance, was a young girl, a mere child, whose whole soul was tuned to beat in unison with a youth she had never seen; yet from the time she first heard his story, when as a little child upon "Uncle Daniel's" knee, she had been told how he "floated away into darkness," he had held an influence over her mind, which was greatly increased by the story we have just finished.

How earnestly she longed to hear from "that boy" once more; and when she did a year or two later, that he had returned, after a successful voyage, and had provided for his old mother, her heart swelled with deep emotion toward her boy hero. But when she heard that he had sailed again with Capt. Bushnell, this time as second mate of the Althea, she felt as though the time would now be very, very long, before she could have any possible hope of seeing the one above all others that she most desired to see. She never expressed, during the next three years, a single wish to accompany her father to Connecticut. But when she heard that the long voyage was ended, and that all had returned in safety, she could not silence that "still, small voice," which kept saying, "I do wish father would make that journey now."

By-and-by she did not wish it, for then she heard that Luke and his mother had gone to that undefined locality, the West, "to seek a new home, where he was going to turn farmer, and if he liked it, then Capt. Bushnell was to follow, after one more voyage." Thus wrote Althea—"and then," she added, "I hope I shall be near enough so that I can hope to see that dear little niece, Indiana."

"Ah me," thought Indiana, "how much more I long to see Luke Weston, than I do Aunt Althea." But she at length gave up all hope of that, for he had gone to some far off, out of the way country, among the Indians of Indiana or Illinois. Still that "spiritual influence" remained with her, and he was her *beau ideal*, to which all others must conform to hope to win her affections.

It is this that I cannot account for. Nor can I account for the reason of the effect upon my mind, of those two simple initial letters found upon that tree, nor why they should carry my mind back among scenes of childhood there, and affix themselves to one whom I had only known by name. Nor why should this impression dwell with me as a part of my nature, as much as Luke Weston did with Indiana Scott Atwater.

I cannot account for the sudden impulse that made me act the part of brother to her father, and assume a character that made me a mystery to the rude, superstitious people by whom I was surrounded. Subsequent events developed effects, not causes.

What impelled Mike Haskins to go out of his way to increase this mystery, which he did by as pretty a piece of romance as ever was woven together by an adept story-teller, I cannot tell.

This is all I have to say about it, and this is why I opened the chapter with a dissertation upon "sympathetic spiritual affinity." I have no theory to support—no explanations to give—I only record events and living characters in the drama of human nature.

Now let the play proceed. The curtain rises upon the same Indian wigwam that we left some time ago, to make our voyage across the Atlantic.

You will recollect that Mike proffered to tell the Indians the story of the white man who had lately come and built his wigwam in the midst of their hunting-grounds, as though he intended to stay.

About this "Che-mo-ko-mon," there was a mystery that Indians could not fathom. Therefore, when Mike said: "Will you listen ?" his proposition was accepted so readily that he was somewhat "taken aback," as a sailor would have expressed himself, but as Mike said: "I felt like a fox squirrel when he has jumped to the last tree. I must go to the top now and stand fire; there's no getting out of it."

I cannot hope to give half of Mike's words, and none of his flowers of rhetoric, by which he illustrated the life of "the wyonet che-mo-ko-mon," a term of high distinction to which I had already attained by my courtesy to old Sabaqua, Shobonier and others.

"Our brother," said Mike, "is a great man. His hair is like snow. His head blossoms with wisdom. His beard is white as the brush of the deer. It hangs down upon his breast. He has a white heart. He has never yet laid a heavy hand upon his red brother. He loves him and has come to dwell with him and protect the graves of those the red man loves. Among these he has found the grave of his own brother. The Great Spirit guided his feet thither. He has come very far, for he was born where the sun rises. His father's wigwam was upon the bank of a lake far more beautiful even than Musqua-och-bis. [The Lake of the red cedars.] His father's grave is there; his brother's grave is here. How came it here ? That is the question he would ask; for he would take him by the hand and call him 'brother,' who has laid his brother to rest in such a beautiful spot. Was it my aged friend ? Then he has done a good deed, and when he sleeps it shall be in peace. But our white friend would inquire, how did my brother die ? Was he killed in battle ? No; for then his body would have lain where it fell. Was he wounded and brought here a prisoner ? No; for then he would not have been buried with so much honor. Did he come to dwell with the red men ? No; for he left a wife more beautiful than a young doe. Her color is like the white lily and prairie rose combined. Her eyes in brightness are like the stars; and her voice as sweet as the meadow lark. Her hands are as soft as those of the rabbit, and upon one of her fingers she wears a bright golden ring——"

"'Like this ? Like this ?' exclaimed old Sabaqua's wife, exhibiting a ring which she had taken, while Mike was speaking, from a package where it was carefully preserved. Mike observed the action, and although he had never heard any thing about a ring belonging to the family, soared away at once upon the wings of fancy, and replied:

"Yes, yes, exactly like that. Both were cast in the same mould by the father of our white-haired friend, Von Wabeson, who was a wonderfully skillful worker in gold. [My father, Mike had ascertained, was a cooper; but no matter for that now; barrels and buckets did not suit his purpose.] The sands of the beautiful lake are full of this precious metal, and the old man gathered it and made two rings, one for his son and one for the son's wife. But how does it happen to be here ? Why was it not—for that is the red man's custom—buried with him who sleeps in the lone grave ? His wife, when she meets him in the spirit land, will look for the ring, and ask him where he has left it. She will ask him with great sorrow: 'Did you give it to an Indian maiden ?'

"No, no, no. It was given to me to keep until the beautiful white squaw comes with hers upon her hand, and by that I am to know her and tell her many things. I shall tell her how he was brought to my wigwam from the battle-field of Tippecanoe, wounded and bloody, and how I nursed him as I would my own son, and made him crutches to walk upon, and carried him in my boat across the lake, where he made his mark on a tree, and said there's where he would sleep, and there's where we laid him when the Summer sun came again. Go and tell his squaw to come to me and I will give her the ring; and that is not all I have to give."

"This," said Mike, in his relation to me, "is about the substance of my story, and the information it elicited. But if you want more, I tell you what it is, we have got the Indians all right now in our books, and can draw on them at sight.

"By-the-by, where is old Shobonier's reservation. I met a great scamp at Chicago, by the name of Hoover, who was inquiring about it, and asked me if I knew any place called 'Shobonier's village?' It appears by the treaty that the reservation was for two sections, 'at his village,' which Hoover wants to find, and then he would try to buy the land of the Indian for a trifle. Now I know that this very spot used to be called his village, but I never let on. I knew if the fellow could see this place, he would try to buy the right of old Shobonier, and crowd you off. I suspect you had better be looking after it. You will find the old fellow at the big grove, west of Bull Creek. His family and Sabaqua's were all together, when I held my pow-wow with them. If you like I will go that way with you in the morning, on my way to the Island, and have a talk with old Shobonier about his land."

Before we got ready to start in the morning, we perceived a horseman approaching from the direction of Chicago, and held up a little to see who he was and what he wanted. It proved to be young Jake Hoover, who had taken to the business of Indian trading, alias Indian robbing, since he was too lazy to work. He brought a paper from Indian agent Owens, at Chicago, which he had procured for the purpose of frightening any timid fellow that he might have occasion to use it upon, so as to make him give up his improvements for little or nothing. The paper was very honestly written by the agent, for a timely caution to any one who might chance to get upon that reservation, which no one but old Shobonier himself could locate, because his village was a very indefinite spot. But somebody had told Jake that this was the identical place, and he presented his paper with an air that indicated his expectations that we should vamose about as quick and in as great a fright as the Indians did from his father's cabin, when Joe Spraker sailed down among them.

Jake, however found, as Mike said, "a different breed of dogs; good to hold on and bark, but mighty bad to run."

I concluded to let Mike do the barking, as he whispered to me, "that it might require some bigger bullets than my gun would carry."

"I suppose," says Jake, "that you don't deny this being the spot meant in the treaty, as old Shobonier, or rather Chevalier's village."

"Deny it! No indeed. No occasion for that; 'case nobody ever thought of it. I've known the place nigh on to twenty years, and I know he never lived here. If you doubt it, go and ask him; we are going right to his wigwam; Come along."

Jake, I think, would a little rather have gone by himself, and made out his own case, using whiskey as his chief counselor, but there was no let up to Mike; he had fixed his mind upon settling this matter, and as he said Jake had come to locate the reservation, he had better finish it up now.

When we arrived at the encampment, I underwent a general tour of handshaking and compliments, that, as Mike expressed it, "put Jake on a cold track." Toward him the Indians were sullen. They remembered some of his "tricks of trade;" such as sewing the ends of a piece of broadcloth together, and measuring it on in an almost never ending circle at ten dollars a yard. Mike opened the argument with Shobonier:

"You reserved two sections of land in the treaty, which Jake Hoover, your old friend the trader, who has sold your people calico and whiskey for furs, and has, I hope, always been honest, has now come to buy and locate upon your friend Wabeson's wigwam so as to send him off and get a place for himself, where he can trade with you again. Do you want to sell?"

"Choin," he replied most emphatically, that being the term for no.

"He says that used to be your village and that your reservation must be there."

"Choin. This is my village; this is the place I reserved. I will not sell it."

"You hear what he says, Jake; if you think that you can alter that decision, fire away. My opinion is that your purchase ain't worth a July coonskin."

I really do not think it was, and although old Shobonier was repeatedly tried by others to locate his reservation upon me, no argument could ever induce him to do so without my consent.

Jake finally took up his residence at Me-won-i-toc's village, where he and his boys made themselves obnoxious to the Indians by plundering the graves. They got a few articles of old rusty iron, guns, pistols, knives and brass kettles: some of the latter still serviceable.

Jo. Spraker and a gang of boys as rough and illiterate as their father, came with Jake. The old village plot, long since abandoned by Indians and until now untouched by white settlers, soon lost all the charm that I had attached to it, as "the deserted village." I could no longer hope to protect the graves from the hyenas and jackals, for the plow was put to work tearing up the deep blue grass sod, and spreading the bones about as though they were of no more account than those of the buffalo which perished in the great snow-storm, and were now plowed under around every spot where a settler had built his cabin.

Jo. said: "Dead Indians are powerful good manure for corn;" and he wished there were more of them to convert to that purpose.

I was anxious to preserve Me-won-i-toc's grave intact, for reasons that the reader can guess, and as it was situated in the grove, out of the way of the plow, I knew it would escape that danger; yet I feared it would be ravished and its bones be scattered by those half-civilized and half-savage boys.

I certainly hoped, as the country was opened to settlement, that I should by-and-by meet with somebody who would feel some interest in knowing who reposed there. I did not wish to tell any one that this was a white man's grave, for that would elicit the question: "How do you know?"

Finally, after I had learned how extremely superstitious Jo. Spraker was, I determined to tell him all the superstitious part of the story of my first night on the prairie, adding a hint that "*I* should not like to disturb that grave."

And py sure, me neither. I should hear the buffalo bones rattle every night. I shall tell my poys, and them tam gallows-birds of Jake Hoover, tey shall get heads brake if they *shall* touch that place. I shall not tell dem vy I vant him not touch, cause tey would laugh at me and dig him up just for spite. I will keep him for travelers to see how de Indians make the graves, py sure."

I think this sufficed for a year or two, during which I had made various efforts to get, as Mike would say, 'a warm scent' upon some track that would enable me to communicate with that Daniel Scott, of whom I had heard so much from Mike Haskins. I visited Gen. Tipton and several other participants in the battle of Tippecanoe, and wrote to Gen. Harrison and others letters of inquiry. Several of them remembered those "two volunteers;" some vaguely and others distinctly, but none could give the least clue to the probable whereabouts of them nor their friends, nor how any trace could be obtained. So I waited on, still hoping that "something would turn up" beside dead men's bones.

The desecration of their burial places was a source of much grief to many of the old Indians. Shebonier would go three miles around rather than pass by Me-won-i-toc's point, where the bones of his wife, sons, daughters and grandchildren had been disturbed.

It is sometimes said that an Indian never weeps. I am sure that those who have thought so would change their opinion if they had seen, as I have, the tears roll down Shobonier's bronzed and wrinkled cheeks when talking about that burial-ground, which white men had plowed over and planted to corn. It even shocked Mike Haskins, little as he respected Indians while living; "but," he said, "when dead, I would let them lie easy in their graves. I have done my part to put a few of them them to rest, and I wouldn't disturb them afterward."

"By the by, did I ever tell you how I fooled the varmints the time I cut stick from the massacre at Fort Dearborn?"

I assured him that he had never even told me that he was in the Fort at that time.

“I have understood,” I said, “that only three of our men escaped with life upon that dreadful occasion.”

“Well, I reckon that ar so, and I s'pose it's no miracle that I am one of the three. But I can't stop now, squire, to tell that story, but I will do it some evening. May be you'd like to have the judge and the sheriff, and a few of them chaps in to hear it, 'case I don't care how many there are, you know.”

That was true of him as of all other story-tellers: they do not care how many listeners or readers they have; the more the merrier. At length, an evening that suited Mike “and a few of them chaps” came round, and he told his story. Here it is.

“Why yes, squire. I *was* in old Fort Dearborn at the time of its surrender. The reason I have not told you about it is, that I never think of it without feeling a sort of itching about the scalp lock, 'case I came nearer losing it that time than ever before or since; and I spose its that that makes me a little unlovely sometimes toward all the red race. I know that every one of 'em has done some thing that would string them up in a Christian country. Here's old Sabáqua. Shovalya, Neomockitaw, Meshiwas, and old Spot, the drunken old dog that you just packed off, every one of them were captains at the battle of Tippecanoe, you may bet your life on that, notwithstanding they are as quiet now as a pet deer. Why, do you know when I was with boss Tipton running this 'ere State line atween the Hooshers and Suckers, just up where it crosses the main Calamic—now don't ever call that Calumet, will you—I met the very fellow that chased me and tried to get my scalp, and he had my gun then in his hands. Mighty! but didn't that make me feel cantankerous? This is how it was.

“I had nothing to do with the running the line business, 'case you see that surveyor's machine is too long a shot for me. My business was—that is me and Indian Jim—was to keep the company in meat. And you'd better believe we did it too. beside fish and fowl. Jim, he acted as interpreter with such Indians as we met, though I think I could beat him at that. Not that I understood words so well, but I can read sign. Didn't we have a powerful time coming through the Kankakee Swamp, though! The surveyor and chain-bearers were up to their arms in mud and water, sometimes a mile on a stretch, for it was right straight ahead and no dodging. I scooted around from one island to another; and had it pretty good most of the time. It was then that I found that island where you first saw me and that same old ‘coon.’

“I've often wondered how the contractor planted his stone mile-posts on the line through that swamp, and got his certificate that they were all right.

“When we got over on the Calamic, we got into a regular ramtangle among the crooks of that river, and for a while Boss Tipton and all the rest on 'em thought we had missed Lake Michigan entirely. The water, you see, where we struck it, would run the wrong way. So we started off to hunt up an Indian or some other sign, to help us unravel the tangle. By-and-by I heard a gun and I told 'em that was an Indian gun sure, and they wanted to know why; it might be some of our folks out hunting. No-sir-ee, I said; no white man would be caught out in the woods, so far away from a saw-mill, with such a saw-log as that on his back. That was a regular old Fort Dearborn musket, such as I used to tote round up there—good for nothing but to burn powder and make a thundering noise. Yes, they were good for the lead trade, an ounce every nip. But to kill a deer with one of them things, you'd want to get near enough to grap him by the tail, when you fired.

“Strange how the noise of that old musket brought up the recollections of that place—the only one that I ever turned my back upon in time of danger. To tell the truth, I had come out on this trip more'n anything else, to get a chance to see the old Fort, and the spot where so many poor fellows were murdered, some eight years afore that.

“But as I was telling on ye, when we heard that gun, we made for the fellow, and pretty soon I spied him, behind a tree, thinking to keep out o' sight. You see these fellows hadn't got quite satisfied that peace with the British meant peace for their allies, the redskins.

We showed the fellow a white flag, to let him know that we were friends and wouldn't shoot. Singular, ain't it, that every people on earth, 'cept them that ain't fit to live on it, will respect a white flag. So the Indian came out and Jim talked Pottowottomie, and the Indian talked something else. I knew it wa'nt Tahwa, for I can talk that a streak right ahead. So I said Delaware, and he answered, ‘Yes, Delaware me. Good Injun. No fight 'Merican.’

“That made me feel sort of clever, and I was going to have a little confab, and a smoke with him. Just as I had got my pipe ready, and was getting out my flint, I happened to cast my eye on the chap's gun. They do say that I made a noise. Well, no wonder; for I felt like a mad catamount, and I reckon if I had been there alone, there would have been one Indian regularly chawed up.”

“Why, what was the matter, Mike?”

“Matter! Blood and thunder; that fellow had my gun. The very gun that I toted in Fort Dearborn. There was my name cut on the breech.

“We had in our company, a chap by the name of Sprague, who was the cutest fellow you ever saw with a jack-knife. He could publish a newspaper with that and a shingle. He had marked nigh on 't every gun in the company, with each feller's name, and mine only two days afore the massacre, so I remembered it right well. I do 'spose I grabbed that gun as though I meant something. I know I meant to knock that Indian's brains out and reason the question afterwards, how he come to have it in his possession.

“Boss Tipton was too quick for me, and I was all over with my fit in a minute, and begged the Indian's pardon, But I insisted upon knowing something about his claim to my property. He knew as well as I did what was the matter, for he knew this was one of the ‘blood guns,’ and he began, after finding he wasn't killed, to draw off 'fore I got another shot at him. I soon assured him that I wouldn't touch him again, and then he said, that ‘he was Delaware—good Delaware’—(good devil, I thought,) that he ‘bought the gun of Pottowottomie—bad Pottowottomie—they murdered the white men and got guns. That way, (pointing up the river, the way he had come), ‘big chief up there talk heap, tell all about it. Come.’

“As it was right on our way to our camp, we were disposed to take the back track and see if out of that heap of talk we could find out where we were, and so we started; but I soon saw that something was wrong; our new friend was uneasy, and I made bold to ask him what was the matter?

“I pretty soon found out that the matter was a deer. He was to be married that night, and had no meat for the wedding feast, and he was afraid that if he took a dozen white men and no deer into the village it might break up the match, or at least make it less satisfactory; for there isn't love enough among the Indians to live upon.

“Now, says I, ‘Redskin, just you make a straight wake for your roost, and carry the Boss to your big man, and let 'em have a talk together about this infernal crooked country that won't let a surveyor run a straight line through it, and me and Jim will take a turn through the bush, and you may count on one deer for sartin, if your old buster hasn't scared 'em all out of the woods.’

“Upon this the Indian started off on the lead, the rest following; mighty glad, too. I reckon he was, to get well shut of my company.

“They hadn't gone half an hour afore I sighted a deer, but I told Jim I wouldn't take that; it was too far to tote it; but Jim said, ‘spose you hang him up—Indian come and get him.’ Right for you, Jim; and so I down with him. We soon had him up by the heels, and started on again, and in just forty-five minutes after the main party arrived, we came in with a rousing big buck strung on a pole between us. As soon as I saw what a snarl of Indians, squaws and papooses there was in old Comishaw's family, I knew this deer wouldn't go far in a feast, and I pretty soon started a couple of chaps off after the other one. These two, with about a cart-load of fish, I thought would make a pretty respectable wedding supper.

"While the two bosses and old Comishaw and two or three others were holding a pow-wow, I had time to look around a little. I wanted to know how my gun came there. Presently I saw an Indian with only one ear.

"Now it so happened that out of a queer sort of a notion, I had always carried that ear that I shot off at Tippecanoe, as my 'great medicine.' This I had done in the first place, because some of our fellers had bantered me by saying that I never should be killed by an Indian while I had it about me. Now I took it out of the little buckskin bag that had held it so long, and walked right up to One Ear and said: 'See here, old fellow, I shot off your ear at Tippecanoe—here it is, pretty well dried, to be sure, but it is the same; you see I never forget old acquaintance.'

"'Why, Mike, did you really recognize him?'

"Now ain't you jolly green? Recognize him! No. Not a bit more than you would recognize one prairie hen from another. But I thought I would fire into the flock; and, true as I live, that shot hit this fellow smack side of the head. The ear *was* his, and he looked devils at me, but the rest on 'em laughed, and I turned round to old Comishaw, and, thinks I, let's try another chance shot. So I said, halloo, old blunderbuss! You are here are you? Your countenance is familiar. You fired at me while I was by the fire, and ran in to get my scalp, but you didn't. Oh, I know you, if you don't know me; but you know boss Tipton, mighty well. However, we've no old grudges. We whipped the life out of ye, in that fight; let's be friends now. Here's my hand. He took it and then shook hands all round, and owned right up that I had hit both shots.

"Well, I had not done shooting yet. I fixed my eyes upon another Indian, and said to him, now, my friend, you are particularly good looking for an Indian, and pretty smart. Wouldn't you like to know how I fooled you in that race, when I ran for my life from Fort Dearborn. Oh, you needn't wince; I know you, too, as well as though I had made you out of white clay, wet up with blood, only yesterday. You are one of the chaps that chased me ten miles over the prairie, and missed me at last in that big grove. Now own up, and I will tell you how I did it. It is no use to deny the fact, for here's this other chap that we found out in the woods with my gun. Here it is. Do you see that name? Oh, you can't read? Well, the more pity for you. I can. I've read four of ye.

"Finally, after they got pretty full of roast venison and fish, and found us a good-natured set of fellows, and no old grudges, they all acknowledged the corn, and with their fondness for stories, and actual respect for any one who has fairly beaten them, 'specially if there is any mystery about it, they begged me to tell them how I beat them in that race.

"You see it was a mighty hard push, to put out as I did, with nothing but my heels to save me from a thousand mad Indians, who had begun the massacre when we had marched about two miles along the lake shore from the fort. There was a pile of sand hills on one side, next the water, and the prairie on the other, with a grove of timber a mile ahead. A good many of our folks tried to hide among the sand hills, or in the water, and some put for the timber, but I know'd they would all be hunted out and tomahawked.

"I struck right off on the open prairie, running like a deer for a heavy grove, which I took to be about five miles south, but I reckon it is over ten. I 'spose I must a got about a mile a start, when they spied me, and three of the red devils, mounted upon their little shaggy ponies, started for me, yelling at every jump. Now it ain't in the natur' of them animals to run, but they endure forever. I knew well enough that horse natur' would tire out human natur' on a long race; and I must outwit the rascals somehow, or this 'coon was done for.

"I think they might have got up within shooting distance any time for the last five miles of the run; but they seemed to think the game sure, and only gave me a yell now and then to let me know they were about.

"The last two miles I gained on 'em, for the ground was so soft that it was just as much as a horse could do to get through. I don't think any civilized horse could. In some places for forty rods together, the grass was higher than my head. I often thought of stopping in this high grass, but afore I could make up my mind I was out on a hard ridge, and could look back and see my pursuers hobbling along, and then again I pulled on for the timber. I don't know what for, unless by hiding I hoped to get them separated, and then try a tussle single-handed with my knife, upon one at a time. At any rate I took courage these last two miles, thinking how I gained on 'em, as the snail said to the milestones.

"When I struck the timber, I reckon I was about half-a-mile ahead. The grove was about a mile through, with a right smart creek on t'other side, and I judged, from the make of the land, some large marshes, and perhaps a river not far beyond. I thought, if I can only get where they can't ride, I am a match for any three cut-throat Indians.

"I am sure if they had known the condition of the prairie ahead, they never would let me live long enough to reach the grove. But as long as the riding was good, they jist naterly enjoyed the chase as you or I would after a wolf. When I got into the tall grass, they couldn't get near enough for a pop at their game. Near the grove the ground was harder, and I was powerful near fagged out. My scalp lock began to feel uneasy. To tell the truth, I wanted to sit down upon a log and rest my legs; but if I did, where would I rest my head? I did stop a minute behind a tree to make observations. I think the villains had lost sight of me for some time, for when they came out of the tall grass they all held up and looked around.

"It is an old saying, 'the devil is good to his own.' I 'spose I must be one of his, for he was good to me that time, sure. As I stood watching my foes, I heard a thundering racket away at the east end of the grove, and out went about forty deer. I assure you, though, gentlemen, I did not stop to count them. I was too busy watching the Indians, who undoubtedly thought they knew why those white flags were sailing out of that grove. They didn't stop to look my way. Instantly they put out to head me off from the swamp. It was a mile at least right away from where I stood, and as they went within easy rifle-shot of my tree, I did wish I had my gun. How I would 'a picked 'em off, one at a time, 'fore they could tell where the shots came from.

"As soon as they were fairly out of sight, I turned right back on my track, nigh on to a mile, and then I stepped aside where there was a little standing water and hard bottom, that won't show a track a bit more than this floor. I followed that as long as I could, and was mighty careful of my steps when I went out. Pretty soon I got into a spot of the very tallest sort of grass, and there I squatted like a mud-hen.

"I have heard that eternity has no end. I can believe it if it is made up of such hours as the five that I spent in that slough, with musketos so thick that they filled my mouth every time I opened it. I think they must have taken about five quarts of blood while I staid with them. The worst of it was their buzzing, for it sounded like my mother's dinner horn, and no wonder, for I was hungry enough to eat my grandfather's old buckskin breeches, if they had been made into a tripe stew.

"For a while there must have been a pretty hunt through that bit of timber land.

"The tarnal fools to go off all on one track. That's the way they lost me. Finally they got tired of hunting the grove, and then they tried another game. It was the game of silence; three to one, but I beat. I don't suppose four men ever made less noise since noise was created, than we did for four hours. But they didn't coax me out of the mud that way. Finally, they got tired of bottling up their wrath, and forty such steamboats as I saw last Spring on the Ohio, couldn't spit out more devil than they did. They were outrageously mad to be thus outwitted. They had set their hearts upon me, just as I do sometimes upon a deer. I follow him miles when I could let him go and get two others. They didn't want to let me go, but they had to. They couldn't track me; they tried to coax me out with silence; that failed; then they thought to make me think they had discovered my hiding place by hollering to one another, 'here he is,' and riding and yelping like mad devils.

"Finally, about dark they rode off toward the lake. I was suspicious that this was another ruse to draw me out; but it was dark, now, and I could dodge and hide in the grass, and beside I couldn't sit here any longer, for all the musketos within a mile had gathered around me and were barking for what little blood I had left. Then I started for the timber, the dark shade of which I could see through the grass.

"When I got up to the edge of the grove, I stopped to listen. I thought I heard something like steps back in the direction the Indians went off, and I suspected mischief. I got down and looked along the ground, and presently saw one of the red gentlemen riding slow and still, right toward me, expecting that I should be up and moving.

I hugged up so close to the tree I was standing against, that I might have been taken for part of it. I intended as soon as the Indians went by, to slip back again to my old hiding ground, but he rode up close to the tree, got off and set his gun against it and stepped off a little to tie his horse to a bush. I could barely see his form, but I noted every movement and understood what it meant. He was going to watch for me as he would for a deer at a salt lick. 'Old fellow,' thinks I, 'you ha'n't counted all the chances.' I reached around and fotched his gun by my side. It was a bran new, tip-top English rifle. I've got that gun yet. Directly he turned around for it. I would 'a shot him, but I was afraid the other two were round somewhere, and didn't like to make a noise to disturb 'em if they were asleep. So I sot the gun against the tree, and stood with my knife ready. Not finding the gun, he thought of course it had fallen down, and stooped to feel for it.

"Gentlemen, did you ever see a catamount jump? Well, that ain't quick enough. Did you ever see lightning jump on a tree and peel the bark? That's more like the way I jumped on that chap's back when he was down on his knees, groping after his gun.

"Says I, old fellow, have you lost something? Perhaps you may be looking for me. Well, here I am. That's my knife in your vitals. I am mighty sorry it's so dark you can't see me. Where's your two brothers? I should like to serve them in the same way. However, your gun is in good order, I think I am a match for 'em now, anyhow. I'll just take your powder-horn and bullet pouch. Thank'ee. Now I'll have a bit of a ride upon that pony of yours.

"And so I did. I think he never went over as much ground in any twelve hours before, as he did afore daylight. You see, as he didn't cost me much, I wasn't particular about saving his strength. I had a special mission to travel over the Wabash.

"I found a little dried venison in the fellow's bullet bag, but it did not satisfy my appetite. I shot a prairie wolf about sunrise, and stopped in a grove to let my pony eat while I roasted a bit. It looks nice, but say what you will, gentlemen, about its being all a notion as to what you eat; I tell you that I had rather have two deer than one wolf. But I made it do, and took a good hunk along with me for dinner in case I shouldn't scare up anything else. But I did though, I got a nice prairie hen, and that served me till I sighted the Wabash Settlement.

"I don't think the sun ever shone upon a hundred and fifty miles of more beautiful country than that right south of old Fort Dearborn—Chicago you call it now. Every inch of it is just as handsome as this prairie, right off here toward old Me-won-i-toc's Point.

"I little expected when I started on that trip afoot that I should come out on horseback, with my scalp in the right place. And I certainly did not expect then, nor when we ran the State line, that I should ever live to see this country dotted all over with white folks. Why, I saw t'other day a hundred and fifty wagons in a string going from the Wabash to Chicago, and that's got to be a right smart sort of a village. It is a rather guess sort of a place, now, than it was the time I had my race across the prairie. By the by, gentlemen, do you know how Chicago ever came by that name? Well, I'll tell you.

"You see, after the massacre, and the destruction of the fort, it was natural enough when a Pottowottomie was asked anything about the whites at that place, to answer 'Cho-ca-go.' That means 'all gone,' and when a white man came along and inquired 'What place is this?' the Indians thought he was asking about the whites, and answered 'Cho-ca-go.' That is the way it got its name; but you Yankees are too much in a hurry with everything to speak slow and deliberate like an Indian, and so you have clipped a little off the pronunciation, and call it Chicago.

"Now, this is about all I have got to say on the present occasion, except I tell you I sold the pony for fifty dollars and kept the rifle, and lived to tell you the story; and that's worth more than both of t'other articles."

Mike's narrative gave great satisfaction to his auditors—more so than it will to those who read it here, because it is shorn of much of the peculiar idiom that made the oral relation of it so piquant. Beside, I have endeavored to abbreviate it as much as possible, without destroying its continuity.

I have also endeavored to abbreviate the narrative portion of my story, whenever I could, where it involved my own acts. I shall do so in the next scene, which exhibits a matter that may appear to the reader rather trivial and uninteresting; yet if he will be patient, the succeeding chapters will show how deeply these ceremonies must have interested me at the time. Indeed, the day following the evening on which Mike told his story, was one not easily forgotten.

Mike was going to Lake Michigan in pursuit of otter skins, which he had promised, but had not succeeded in taking during the Winter hunt.

As I also wanted some, he was going on joint account. Therefore I took my wagon "to give him a lift," as he termed it, although fifteen miles of "that sort of traveling" was all that he thought he could stand in one day. That I could give him and get back home the same night.

Only for the resolution above expressed, I would give the reminiscences of that day's ride, and fill a whole chapter. Mike's stories were only interrupted by that irresistible propensity a hunter has to kill game whenever it crosses his path.

Mike, however, to his credit, always resisted, unless he had some reasonable excuse—either an actual want of meat, or, as in the present case, an opportunity to serve a friend.

Directly after crossing Deep River, he said: "Now Squire, you hold on a bit, and let the horses blow, and I'll put a deer in your wagon. I know it will come in play just now, as your camp is right smartly full. I never know'd it fail that I couldn't find something in that ravine."

Sure enough, he found him this time. In about half an hour I heard his report—the same English or Indian rifle he spoke of last night—and I started on in that direction, where I soon found the hunter and his game, a noble ten-spike buck.

There was scarcely a bend in the river, or prominent feature along the route we drove, that did not elicit some anecdote from this inexhaustible story-teller. But I must leave them all untold, because I met with more important adventures, after Mike said: "Now, 'Squire, I have jist about as much of this sort of travelling as I am able to stand to-day. I feel as though I must walk a while to rest me, so I can sleep to-night. I'm much obliged to you, however, for I did want to get a little fresh meat for your folks. Good-by; I shall be back as soon as I can find an Indian that has got the skins."

On my return I came by the way of Me-won-i-toc's Point, and stopped in at Spraker's, for I saw a new building had lately been put up, in the edge of the grove, I thought very near to the grave I had tried so hard to have preserved, about which I wanted to give them another caution. When I inquired about it Joe hemmed and hawed, and smoked and fidgeted around, without giving any direct answer. At length, I said: "Now look here, Joe Spraker, what is the use of your beating around the bush? Why not own up at once, and shame the devil? The truth is, and I know it, and you know I know it; you or your boys have opened old Me-won-i-toc's grave, and I hope you will have enough of the old fellow, now you have let him out. I told you there was a mystery about that grave, and that you had better leave it alone. Did you find his long pipe and tobacco-box, and stone pipes, and axe, and burnt bones, and what else?"

"Oh mine goot Cot Almighty, 'Squire, who told you all dese tings was dere? I tells de poys, dey shall say nottings to nobody, and now you comes and tells it all. Peter, you might so well creeps under the ped and brings dem out and let the 'Squire see em."

"Under the bed, you intolerable old heathen!" I said with all the show of consternation that I could assume. "Under the bed! and there you expect to sleep, with these things under it, from the grave of one of the greatest magicians that ever lived in the Pottowottomie nation."

"Oh Joe Spraker," his wife chimed in, "you is one of the biggest fools what never was. I told you to let that thing alone, as the 'Squire wanted you should. He said that you had petter plow up all the Indians on the prairie than that one."

"Indians!" said I, "that was no Indian. It was a white man, white as you are; and the other body was his daughter's, one of the most beautiful girls that ever was or ever will be seen upon this prairie. You found her in a hemlock bark coffin, wrapped in linen cloth, and blankets, and——"

"Yah, yah. The devil helps you by sure, to know so much apout as we do. And here is the ring that was on one hand, and this box was in the other. You shall take them all. I would not sleeps no one wink to-night if dey was in de house. And dere is de pipes and de knife, mit de handle burnt off mit de fire."

"And the bones, what have you done with them?"

"Oh, by sure, we have done not anything mit them. We build de corn-house right over the spot and cover them up again."

"Very well; no thief will ever steal any corn out of that crib; you may be sure of that. Make the door on the east side; do you understand. And never go into it after dark, without a light. One thing more: whenever you find a buffalo bone on the prairie, the first day of the new moon, just you bring it home, and have a little hole in the floor and drop it through. That's all. Do you understand?"

"Py sure I does; and Peter and Katrine, you hears too. Now, 'Squire, you takes all dese tings, will you?"

"Yes, I will take care of them till they are called for, as they will be some day, and those bones, too."

As I thought the boys were not quite so glad to get rid of the things as Joe and Katrine were, I handed each of the four a half dollar, which they pocketed with a wink at each other that assured me they would be glad to open every Indian grave in the State, at the same rate; and at which I considered the present stock of relics decidedly cheap.

As it was late in the evening when I got home, I did not examine my purchase that night, and although kept in my bedroom, I was not disturbed by old Me-won-i-toc's ghost. I found the ring after scrubbing with soap-suds, a plain gold one, with a white setting, which after ridding of an accumulation of dirt, or more likely dried blood, I was satisfied was a diamond of no mean value. I resolved to keep my own secrets, and I was pretty sure the Sprakers would say nothing about having opened a white man's grave, as I had told them the penalties they had incurred.

I put the ring safely away, and took up the brass tobacco-box, over which I pondered a long time. It was placed in the hand of the girl. What for? Was it a box of sweet incense? It was full of some resinous substance, almost as hard as stone. I had enumerated the tobacco-box to Joe entirely at random. But this was not the father's; it had been placed in the hand of his daughter. What for? I must ask old Shobonier. Just then a shadow passed my office window, and I hastily closed my desk in which lay the long knife, axe, pipes, old pistol barrel and lock, and various other metal articles and buttons. The door opened softly and old Shobonier entered. I instantly repeated, "Speak of the devil and he will come to you."

I looked glad to see my visitor, and filled him a pipe. After a little I opened my desk and said, "look."

"How! how! Me-won-i-toc!"

"Yes. The scamps have opened that too. What is the reason this knife blade has not rusted, like all the other articles?"

"Great medicine; Me-won-i-toc."

It was some art that he had of varnishing that knife, so as to keep it always bright, and in spots it was comparatively so now. Then I took the box out of my pocket, and as he looked at it he said:

"The white swan."

"Yes; but what is it? What is it for? Why was it put in her hand, resting upon her breast. Is it a charm?"

"Koenuckee; charm."

I took my knife and began to scrape off a little of the resin. He judged that I wanted to find out what was inside, and took the box out of my hand, and hit it two or three taps on the stove. The resin broke in pieces, and inside of it was a little buckskin pocket, which he handed me. It contained some hard substance. My first impression was that the purse contained a silver dollar found in the girl's pocket, which had been buried with her to pay expenses on her journey to the white man's spirit land; as the Indians suppose that every thing connected with the white race is moved by money. I said, feeling it between my fingers, "Gote moqua?" He answered emphatically, "choin," the Indian no, to my assertion, "one dollar."

I then opened the pocket and unwrapped from several other folds of soft buckskin, an elegant ivory painted portrait of a very handsome young man, set in a gold frame, and all in as good order as the day it left the artist's hands. I remembered then that Shobonier had told me of a lover that the girl had left behind, and to whom he had intended to restore her. This, then, was his portrait, which her Indian lover had put up so it would remain perfect long after he and all his race had gone to dust.

I now resolved once more to make another effort to discover the original of this picture. I thought I would try Mike's powers of recognition and if this was the likeness of the man who told the stories in camp on the Wabash, I would endeavor to trace him up, and find him or some of his family, and restore to them these long-buried, precious relics. In the meantime an idea suddenly struck me, to write to some one at my native place, inquiring after "the Atwater family." But here was a new difficulty. I had been absent more than thirty years and now could not recollect the name of any one but some of the old men, who had probably all gone to the spirit land before this time.

Finally, I determined to write to that official gentleman, who is supposed to know everybody and everything, and to be bound to answer all such queer inquiries, as I was about to put to him. Thus it was that I addressed my letter "to the postmaster." His answer, which came in due time, will be found in the next chapter. It did not throw any very strong light into the darkness of Me-won-i-toc's grave.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

What fearful scenes are those of frontier life that chill the blood!

The following is the letter which I received in answer to mine, addressed to the "post-master:"

"Your letter from Michigan City came to me nigh on to a fortnight ago, since which I have been inquiring round among the people about the Atwater family that used to live here, as you seemed sort o' anxious to know. I am in debt to you for a sight of information about the prairie; but I can't understand how it can be so rich, though I've read your letter to a good many people, 'cause it was interesting like, and thus, I thought I could get to hear something that you want to know. I haven't been here many years, and didn't know much myself about old affairs.

"I wish you had told us just where Michigan City is, for I can't find a sign of it on the map. Is it on Lake Michigan? And that prairie that you talk about, now, is the soil really two feet deep? And does the grass grow high as a man's head in wet spots?

"But to answer you; old Deacon Atwater, who used to live here in a fine old place by the pond, has been dead nigh on to twenty years. Folks say he was a real fine old gentleman. Well, he had two sons. Nathan lived at Glastonbury, but he moved away, and folks say he went to the Ohio, and some say he's dead. Abel married a French girl, and you would think to hear some of the people talk about her that she was a princess. She started from here to go to France with her father and was shipwrecked. I don't see either how that can be, for she was brought back to the deacon's to be buried. I've seen her grave-stone a hundred times, and there is no end to the way old people talk of her funeral and what a beautiful corpse. Abel then joined the army and was killed in some of the Indian wars out West; I believe it was the one where Gen. Harrison and Tecumseh fought the six nations, and Abel and Tecumseh were killed nigh together. Abel's eldest sister married a fellow named Sidney, and moved away, I didn't know where. I believe they didn't do very well. He was a pedler, and it was a sort of a love match. The next sister, Miss Althea, I've heard a heap about, because she married a sea-captain by the name of Bushnell, and he named a ship after her. They moved from here to Saybrook, but I can't hear of them there now. There is a story that Capt. Bushnell was taken by a pirate, commanded by one Luke Weston, a native of these parts. They say he returned here after an absence of a dozen years, as rich as Cæser, and took his mother off with him to South America or somewhere. That was a good job for the town, let his money come from where it would, since the selectmen were a sight afeard she'd become a town charge some day, as she had no other children.

"The last of the Atwater family about here was a son of Abel's named Fortune. I think he ought to have been called Misfortune, since he had one and missed it; that is after he had squandered it in dissipation. He hasn't been about here of late. I think some folks would be glad to see him, though for the matter of that, I don't know what good 'twould do, as he hasn't any thing to pay with. He always said, when remonstrated with, that when this property was gone, he knew where to find plenty more that his father left out in the Indian country. Perhaps you know something about it; I don't.

"As to the Scotts, nobody seems to remember much about them. They've been gone a long time. Daniel was killed at the same time that Abel Atwater was. One of his sisters was back here on a visit some years ago. She married a doctor, though I can't tell his name, but he was a Down-Easter I think they live in Virginia or Ohio, or somewhere out your way. I guess it would be pretty hard to find them seeing as you don't know the name.

"One of my neighbors wants me to ask you if it ain't rather dangerous to live as you do among wild Indians. He has thought of moving to Indiana, but reading so much about the Black Hawk war a few years ago put him quite out of the notion. By-the-by, there was a general by the name of Scott mixed up with that war. Can he, do you think, be any connexion of your Scott family?

"Well, I believe I have told you about all I know of the matter. If it's of any use I am sure you are welcome."

I hope the readers of this volume are amused if not instructed with "about all I know of the matter." I am sure I should have been, if I had then known all the incidents that I have related. Such a jumble of facts and fancies seldom gets mixed up in one letter. However, it introduced several new characters, and gave me an inducement after I got hold of one end of the yarn to unravel the whole.

Failing entirely in my post-master experiments, I began to think what I could do next. There was one thing. Taking Shobonier's narrative, and the stories of Mike as a basis, I began writing tales which were published in various papers. Although they brought me scores of letters, from those who had lost friends, none came from the right source, and some of them were more ridiculous than the one just read. Not one of them referred back to the date of my history. How could I expect it? Fifty years had elapsed since the first of the scenes transpired, and half that time had gone since the battle of Tippecanoe. Well might all the Scotts and Atwaters be dead, or "gone to parts unknown."

Strange as it may appear, I had, during the several years between the opening and closing scenes of this drama, one abiding confidence that "something would turn up," to unvail the mystery. During these years what a change had come over the face of this region. The reader will recollect what a wide waste of uncultivated land we entered upon the first night on the prairie. I built my cabin fifteen miles from neighbors, in a beautiful grove, with an outlook upon sunrise. The hickory trees dropped their ripe fruit upon the roof of the cabin, which was a counterpart of old Jake Hoovers, and all others of the same order of architecture. The sides were built of round logs, as rough as nature provides, but made as warm as clay, daubed between the cracks, can make them; the roof like that which the scouts threw down upon the affrighted Indians; the floor, door, and all the "joiner-work" of stuff split by the axe and frower, out of the neighboring trees, without any aid from sawyer nor saw-mills.

Independent of the natural beauty of the location, the greatest attraction was the garden spot—a little nook in the grove, that had been long used by the Indians as a corn-field. This was ready at hand for the new settler to begin to produce food. Then, there was a beautiful little plot of "blue grass" that held its verdure long after the native grass of the prairie and woods had turned sear by frost, or black with fire. Around the garden in a jungle of hazle bushes, were thickets of crab-apple, and wild plum and cherry-trees, interspersed with hickory and bur-oak, some of which were very ancient, and gave a marked character to this part of the grove, enabling a traveler to steer for that point when four or five miles away upon the prairie.

The bur-oak is peculiar to this Northern region. It is very umbrageous, and unlike all other oaks, in foliage, form and fruit.

A few rods from the site I chose for the location of the first settler's cabin, was a spring of sweet water, and this, combined with other things, made the spot a desirable one.

In four days after the place was selected the house was built and occupied. The room was about sixteen feet square, and one cold night during the Winter it gave shelter to sixteen men and women, to say nothing of several small children. It was rather close quarters, to be sure, but the occupants were all fed and lodged comfortably. The fire was a hot one although burning in a fire-place built without any aid of brick or stone.

These people were the advance-guard of pioneers of the great flock that alighted upon the prairie and around the various groves, early in the Spring following the first scene of the present story, thus changing the whole character of the country, almost as much and as rapidly as I had changed the old Indian garden spot where I had "squatted"—a term given to settling upon the public lands before the surveys are finished so as to bring them into market.

One of the incidents of this attempt to make a settlement in the wilderness in the beginning of Winter shows some of its excitements and dangers, and attracted much attention when published some time afterward. Perhaps it will bear telling again.

The teams which brought the family to its new home could only bring a limited supply of provisions, and the fresh air, out-door exercise, and living in tents had created a consuming appetite. This was increased by the alkali of the burnt prairie-grass, which affected the drinking-water. At any rate, the four men employed to build the cabin exhibited appetites dangerous to a limited commissariat, and then there was a dozen "land-hunters" whom it was hard to refuse, when our cabin was the only place where hunger could be appeased within a circle of thirty miles or more.

As soon, therefore, as possible, after the cabin was occupied a team was started upon "the first trip to mill." This involved, as we calculated, counting the distance out and in, a journey of about seventy-five miles, and that it could be accomplished between Monday morning and Saturday night.

Alas for calculations. I advise no settler in a new country to rely upon them without, at least, a week's supply of food ahead. If it is true that "there is many a slip between the cup and the lip," I can affirm that there are more between the mill and the meal-tub.

Fowler started at daylight Monday morning, whistling cheerily to his oxen, as he felt satisfied with his undertaking, and safe from want, with a supply of cooked rations for the outward trip, which was accomplished in two days of beautiful November weather.

At what was then only the sandhill skeleton of Michigan City, he found it quite impossible to buy flour, and had to go a dozen miles farther and buy wheat, and take it to the mill, and "wait his turn." With but one mill for the scattered population of territory enough for three or four counties, the turns were long ones. His was over three days. The extra journey to buy the wheat and pork used up three other days. In the meantime a heavy storm had swelled the streams so that they were not fordable.

What was to be done? Just what all live Yankees always do when they meet obstacles in their path. They find a way to overcome them. As he could not ford he ferried. That is he took his axe and auger, which he carried with him, and constructed a raft, upon which he ferried his load. In doing this he exercised practical economy; the great secret of success in many undertakings. In the first place he swam his oxen over, carrying the yoke on his raft. Then he yoked them up again, and chained them to a tree, and went back and shifted the load from the wagon to the raft, and tied a rope to the end of the tongue, which he placed just in the edge of the water. Then he paddled over with the other end of the rope, which he fastened to the oxen and they soon drew the wagon through the water. It was but a few hours' work to accomplish all this, and thus pass an obstruction that would have delayed an inefficient man for a week.

He still had two other streams to cross, and one of them on the prairie, where rafting would not be an easy matter. This somewhat troubled him, but he pushed ahead. That night brought on "a norther," and the cold was so intense that all still water was rendered solid, and as his route lay across a wide stretch of wet prairie, the ice was good for the wagon, but bad for unshod oxen, and caused him to make long detours to avoid glassy smooth ponds. He reached the second stream about noon. Here the difficulties really looked insurmountable. The ford was frozen—the water falling, leaving the stream a concave channel of ice. He could force his oxen down, but reason told him they never could get up the other side. The cold was intense. Upon this he acted. With his knife he cut armfuls of long grass and laid it upon the ice, and dipped up pailfuls of water, and sprinkled it on until he made a hay-path across, over which he drove the oxen, one at a time. Then he went back and fixed the rope to the wagon tongue. It came down with a rush, and half-way up the other incline, when the rope broke and down the wagon went, crashing through the ice and resting in the water up to the floor of the bed. Unfortunately the ice was so broken upon the side where the bags were wanted, that they could not be carried out that way. But the persevering teamster was not to be baulked. He lifted out his load, a bag at a time, carried it a quarter of a mile up the stream, and crossed upon a fallen tree, and then pulled out the empty wagon, and once more replaced his load.

It was now 9 o'clock at night, and he was thoroughly tired, and would gladly have camped where he was and roasted a little of his frozen pork, and baked a cake in the ashes for his supper, for he had eaten nothing since sunrise, and then but a scanty ration, as he expected to be at home before night. He still had ten miles, two-thirds of it prairie, and another crossing half-way. "That, he thought, being a broad sluggish stream, without current, will be frozen hard, and I shall glide over easily." He thought, too, that six days' rations had been carefully counted before he left home, for those who remained, and he had already been gone more than double that time.

"They are looking for me," he said to himself, and then he said. "I will go ahead or perish in the attempt."

He might well say perish, for he had wet his feet and much of his clothing, in this last battle with the elements. But he was a soldier who could only be conquered by death, and his example of what can be done by energy is worthy of this record, as a pattern for emulation. It is such as he, who have rapidly redeemed the great West from its wilderness state.

During all these days of delay what were the thoughts of that family in the lone cabin, in the grove, beyond the broad prairie which Fowler traversed that dismal cold night.

The first six days everything went on, cheerful as usual. Even some extra demands upon scanty supplies did not dishearten us, for we had full faith that the stock would be replenished Saturday night, as the weather had been fine. There was still bread and meat enough for one day more, but I must say that it would have been an extremely welcome sight that evening to see Fowler and his white oxen on the crest of the black prairie about four miles distant; and many an anxious gaze was sent that way before evening shades shut out the prospect. Then I kindled a beacon-fire to guide him and tended it till midnight, and leaving it still blazing, I went to bed.

Sunday morning we had a visitor. I presumed that he came hungry, and I felt that every mouthful he took, would be one less for my children. I certainly did not press him to stop for dinner. That was not what he came for. He had come to "borrow some flour or meal."

"I have just settled," he said, in the grove across the prairie, and my brother has gone to mill, and should have been back two days ago. As he has not we have got out of breadstuff. Seeing a fire here last night, I thought I would ride over and ascertain if there was a settler here. who could help us a little. I think we can get along for meat, and I see by the looks of your gun you are quite independent. There you are ahead of me, for I've got none. I showed him the flour-barrel with about a pint at the bottom, and a ham-bone with a little gristle as our stock of provisions. and he went away as he came: satisfied that if he did starve he would have company.

Sunday night I did not light a beacon-fire, for the rain came down in torrents. I knew that Fowler, wherever he was, must wait, and so must we. Monday I intended to use my gun, but the rain was too heavy. I watched all day for prairie hens to come within reach as they often had, but not one of them ventured out in the rain. So we scraped the bone and the flour-barrel for dinner. We had three articles in reserve for supper—coffee, honey, and cranberries.

In the afternoon a solitary quail ventured within six rods of the cabin door. I said to myself I will now clip your head off with my gun, as I had often done to other birds, just as Mike did to the Indian's ear. I was what is termed "a crack shot," using a heavy rifle, "forty to the pound" in caliber. I opened the door gently a little way and sighted the quail and fired. I knew I had killed him, but my little boy who ran to pick it up could not find it, and I went out and found that I had fired too low, and cut his body into five distinct parts, scattering the pieces as though the ball had exploded like some of the infernal things fired by the rebels into the bodies of our soldiers.

In the present scarcity of provisions the pieces of the poor quail were gathered, dressed, and stewed with the last flour in the house—the contents of the dredging-box—and this was our supper. The breakfast was a light one, but I had confidence in a more plentiful dinner, as the weather was clear, and the ground soft, I had no doubt that I could track a deer, and for that purpose cleaned my gun and was about loading when I discovered that the powder-horn was missing.

"Where is my powder-horn?" was my anxious inquiry.

"Who used the gun last?"

"Fowler."

"Then the powder-horn is in the pocket of his green blanket coat. There is where he carries it, and that is the one he wore."

"Yes, and the one he is wearing to-day, dead or alive, somewhere. I wish I knew where."

"So do I, father, for I am hungry."

This brief dialogue between husband, wife and child closed that scene, then enter "old Spot." The wife pours out a cup of coffee, adds honey, and hands it to him with the remark that she had no bread. This he does not understand, but looks longingly toward the little closet in the corner, made of an emptied packing-box, out of which he had received several generous slices from the nice wheaten loaf. The question was mute but intelligent, and I answered:

"Cho-ca-go quashkin." [All gone, bread.]

He was satisfied, and simply repeated "Chocago," to show he understood, and drank his coffee, well contented with our hospitality. I explained as well as I could by a few words and some signs, that "green coat" and the oxen had been gone as many days as I had fingers, after a supply of "quashkin," and he satisfied me that high water was the reason he had not returned. He reiterated "chemichase bish," which I afterward learned meant an abundance of water.

As he took up his gun to go, the thought struck me to ask him to lend me some powder. I succeeded in making him understand, but he had but two charges. This he divided with me, and I put one in my gun and started on my hunt. I saw two deer in the course of the morning which I should have fired at under ordinary circumstances, but the fear of wasting my single charge withheld me from taking the risk, and I did not find any chance to fire at another with certainty. So I traveled until I grew faint, and felt that I must carry some food to the family at once, and then spent my last shot upon a prairie hen.

As I entered the house with this trophy my little boy met me at the door munching a cake. I wondered if the miracle of manna had returned, but instead, I found that his mother had recollected a box of crockery packed in bran, out of which she had sifted the finer part, and this made very good batter-cakes. The coarser portion was used to thicken a goodly-sized pot of soup, made of the prairie-hen and the bone of that ham, which we had already scraped pretty clean; yet when broken up it yielded some more sustenance. This gave us a luxurious supper, leaving enough for two more slight meals.

I determined, as soon as I had secured this provision for the family, to make a trip to the next settlement, fifteen or eighteen miles distant, but I was dissuaded from the undertaking on account of the danger of attempting to ford the swollen streams. That night the water froze so as to render crossing impossible. Then we began upon a system of half rations, to eke out our bag of bran until the ice became solid enough for Fowler to cross, which we believed to be the only cause of his delay.

At the time he was working to overcome the difficulty I have mentioned, and get his wagon out of the ice, we looked for him with a degree of anxiety not easily imagined. We were now totally out of provisions. We had not even the bran-cakes and honey to look to for breakfast. The bran-bag was empty. True, we had coffee, cranberries, and honey, but they did not satisfy that longing for "something to eat."

That night I tended the beacon-fire faithfully till midnight. I even made a blazing torch of dry hickory-bark, with which I climbed high up into a tree, and waved it to and fro, that the expected teamster might see and know that it was a signal for him. And this he saw; and oh how it cheered him on; for then he knew that the course in which he was steering was correct.

The reader will please to remember that the teamster's route was across six or seven miles of prairie, recently burnt over, leaving it as black as charcoal. There was no road, no path, no mark to steer by but the stars, and these were frequently overcast.

It was during this long and lonely drive that the waving torch was seen, and a little further on the fire on the ground came in view from some of the ridges of the prairie.

When I came down from the tree I went far out on the prairie where stillness prevailed, and lay down, with my quick ear upon the ground to listen for the wheels rolling over the frozen surface, but no sound came. Sadly I went back, replenished the fire, and in a frame of mind that no one need envy me for, went to my bed and restless sleep.

I had yet one resource to preserve the family from starvation. This was my boy's pet Indian pony mare, which I had purchased on my way from the south part of the State, after I crossed the Wabash at Logansport—then a very small port. She had become attached to us, indeed the attachment was mutual, and the thought of killing her for food was dreadful.

With such thoughts I fell asleep and dreamed of applying the knife to Dolly's throat, and that she looked up to me with eyes that seemed to say, "if it was me I would starve first." To this I replied, "and so will I, but you must run away—go." And away she trotted. I could distinctly hear her step on the frozen earth, and that waked me; but the sound of the steps did not cease. They grew more and more distinct. I jumped out of bed, into my clothes, and out at the door in three successive rapid bounds.

The sound of heavy steps was now distinct, but none sound of wheels. Again I listened and heard the clang of iron. 'Tis the sound, I said to myself, of the ring of the ox-yoke, clanging in the staple, as the oxen walk with a tired, reeling gait. I turned to other anxious listening ears, for my wife was equally awake, and felt, more than a father can, for her children. She simply said, "Fowler is coming," and then I heard sobs, and "thank Heaven—before it was too late."

I went to brighten the fire, to make it show a welcome face to the tired traveler, and then, hearing "whoa, buck," I opened the door and saw Fowler and his oxen but no wagon.

"Welcome, welcome, home again, I said; come in; I will take care of the oxen. I know you are tired and cold and——"

"Hungry. Yes, hungry enough to eat an owl; anything but a turkey-buzzard."

"Oh dear," said the good woman, "and we haven't a mouthful in the house. What shall we do!"

"Arise, cook and eat. I thought how short you were, and when the wagon went through the ice, back here in the river, I took an empty bag and put some flour in one end and pork in the other, and swung it over the ox-yoke, and here it is."

Somewhere in the small hours of that night the first settler's family upon the prairie, enjoyed a most luxurious meal of hot biscuit, fried fresh pork, strong coffee, honey, and stewed cranberries.

The next morning the load from the wagon came home on a sled. The wagon waited for a thaw. The first settler had learned a lesson that he never forgot, and never since has been on short rations. The first trip to mill was an instructive one. It taught the necessity of looking out before-hand—that it is sometimes in early Winter, "a hard, hard road to travel," over pathless prairies and unbridged streams, and that those who are pioneers in the settlement of such a country have many difficulties to overcome.

The determined energy and persevering spirit of Fowler in overcoming such difficulties as would have been absolutely insurmountable to a timid man, teaches another great lesson to the settler of a new country, where the paths of life are filled with obstructions, never before encountered—obstructions and difficulties that are so appalling to some men, that they are entirely unfit to be pioneers in a new settlement.

Not only difficulties but actual dangers that are often met with by travelers over the prairies, are unknown in a country where the roads are fenced and the streams bridged. I remember half a dozen instances where persons who lost their way have perished. One endeavored to prolong his life by killing and disemboweling his horse, and getting all but his head inside the carcase.

From appearances, when found, it was believed that the flesh of the animal froze stiff, and thus imprisoned, the man lost his life, a victim of cruelty and folly.

Another who had been to mill encountered a severe snow-storm on the prairie, and lost his way. After wandering several miles in darkness, his harness broke and he perished, after vainly trying to cover himself with loose bran and bags of flour.

One man was found dead where he had made quite a path running around in a circle, which it appeared he had been unable to leave.

When one is lost there is a sad bewildered state of mind that is quite uncontrolable. In one case I knew an active, intelligent man, who fell into this condition one night in crossing a prairie about five miles toward his home. After wandering several hours he saw and steered for a light which he found in a strange house—strange to him, for he had arrived at his own, from the opposite direction, and in his bewilderment did not recognise the place. He rode up, called, a stranger came to the door, of whom he inquired the way home. It was his own wife! When he finally comprehended who it was, he inquired how she came there, still fancying from the distance that he had traveled, that he was many miles away.

Another of the perilous adventures of new settlers occurred to the three families mentioned a few pages back, who made up the sixteen lodgers in that cabin, only sixteen feet square.

This party crossed the Wabash about three months later than Fowler's trip to mill, thinking the Winter had yielded to the approach of Spring, as the weather was then warm and beautiful for their long drive across the prairie. It was an important matter with them to travel in Winter because they could then cross the great Kankakee marshes and the river upon the ice. They made their drives from grove to grove where they could find fuel to warm the tent at night.

They soon felt the need of this for the weather turned intensely cold, freezing the water into glassy ice, which had thawed during the previous sunny days. At the point where they intended to strike the river there is no timber for ten miles. About half-way over this stretch they rose a slight elevation from which they looked forward upon one almost continuous sheet of ice. It was hoped that by picking a crooked way through the most grassy spots, they might reach the river bank and fuel before night, but the attempt proved futile. The oxen and horses after falling repeatedly became alarmed and refused to proceed. Night was at hand, the thermometer below zero. and six or seven miles of an icy road for tired, discouraged men and beasts, either forward or backward to the timber. It was a dangerous situation—a most disheartening moment. Darkness was upon them before they got back to the knoll. Still five miles of icy way to timber and a fire. In crossing the knoll one of the wagons got out of the track, struck something, and stopped. In looking about in the grass for the obstruction it was found to be the trunk of a tree, felled by some vandal destroyer. A little further search revealed a set of house-logs that some one had hauled there with the design of building a log cabin. A halt was at once called, and of these logs a fire was made as soon as possible, the tent set up, and the lives of half the company, probably. saved by this accidental discovery of the means of making a fire in this desolate spot. Still it was a dreary night, for there was nothing but the thin cotton tent-cloth to shelter men, women, and children from the north wind, which brought the thermometer down to ten degrees below zero. The party had already made a detour out of their true course of more than twenty miles, but it became necessary the next morning to move ten miles farther down the river. Here they found the cabin of a Frenchman, an Indian trader, who, although he extended his hospitality to the freezing travelers, was hardly able to make them as comfortable under his roof, as under their tent on the bleak prairie. But the cold was so intense that they were compelled to spend two nights closely huddled in these uncomfortable quarters. The most of the intervening day was spent in freezing hay upon the icy bridge of the river to enable the oxen to cross, the wagons being rolled over by hand.

Once over, the way lay directly up the bank to recover their lost ground. As their route skirted the timber they had no fear of this grand prairie, as they were sure of finding good camping-ground until certain land-marks should be reached as laid down upon the chart which I had furnished the leader of the party. Then they were to turn squarely to the North, following the line of the grove some ten miles, to where that "lone cabin" would be found.

Upon the route up the Kankakee were two desperately bad creeks, deep and muddy, and if not frozen, only here and there fordable. At one of these an accident occurred similar to the one that caused so much labor to Fowler. The team of the first wagon passed over easily, but the ice under the wheels sunk down into a trough, several feet lower in the center than the bank.

It took six hours of precious time to extricate this and find another spot to cross the other teams, and it required all the force of men and animals to get the stalled wagon out of the deep channel. Then, after dark. the company had six miles of prairie to cross before a fire could be kindled, and they were in constant fear of finding on the way another treacherous ice-bridge.

Readers who have never suffered the perils encountered by the first immigrants into a new country can hardly imagine the delight of such a company to find a termination of their journey at the warm fireside of an old friend, although his cabin was both narrow in its limits and rough in its appearance.

Shall I tire you, reader, if I relate one more story ("positively the last,") of frontier life, and the perils encountered by the pioneers? I will risk it.

In returning to my home from Chicago once, in mid-Winter, I passed over the same ground that Mike traveled in his famous race for life. It was just after "the January thaw" which had flooded the streams, so that the spot where he "squatted like a mud-hen," was for half a mile almost swimming to the horses. It was quite up to the bed of a stout two-horse farm-wagon. A little beyond that grove a good-sized mill-stream crosses the road which, on the outward trip, we passed upon the ice. Now the water was four feet higher than the ice was then, with an entire uncertainty whether the ice was still there. If it was, then the peril of crossing was not great. The question was, how to determine that fact. The water was so turbid, that nothing could be seen. The situation was on the prairie where no pole could be got conveniently to sound the stream. A little way off was a bank where some stones of ten or twenty pounds could be obtained. Several of these were placed in the hind end of the wagon, and that backed as far as was thought prudent into the stream. Then, by tossing these toward the channel, giving them a high elevation, it was determined that the ice-bridge was still there, though far down under water. The risk must be taken. The wagon was turned and driven in. The condition of the ford would soon be proven by a safe passage, or the loss of wagon and horses, perhaps the loss of the driver and two brothers. It was truly a case of "neck or nothing." Fortunately, we saved our necks for a greater peril some hours later. We spent the night upon the edge of another creek that was declared by the settler when we arrived to be unfordable. The next morning, finding that if we could not cross, we would head it by going fifteen miles around, he concluded we might get over, as our horses were smart. I knew by experience they could swim. My greatest fear was that they would have to do so now in a swift current, and intensely cold weather. The settler went out and examined the stream, and declared the water was not over three and a-half feet deep. Then, I said, we can ford safely, and as the land is smooth beyond, the chill can be soon taken off the horses. I drove down to the edge of the stream and hesitated. I had crossed there before, and now saw the water was much higher and fearfully rapid.

"Oh there is no danger," said the man. "And we shall save fifteen miles and get home to-night," said my brothers, "go ahead," and go ahead I did.

I suppose the length of the ford might have been one hundred feet. At less than half that distance I saw the horses were off their feet, but they knew what to do and settled to the work. My fear now was, that the wagon-bed would float from the forward axle, and I gave the alarm to my brothers. They sprang forward just in time each to seize one of the forward wheels, before they reached the deep water, where they would have sunk and left the other wheels and bed afloat, and we should have been lost inevitably. They held up the the wheels by main strength until they again touched bottom. In a minute after we stood three happy men upon the dry shore, and cast a shuddering look behind.

Hastily emptying our boots of water, and wringing and replacing the stockings, we were about to rub the water off the horses, but found it already a sheet of ice upon the harness and wagon. We then knew it would be the wisest course to give the faithful animals rapid exercise. This we did for five miles along a sandy ridge. Then by striking across a lake and marsh about five miles, we could save five miles of distance in the day's drive. We undertook the short drive and found it good for a mile. Then we began to come upon a thin new ice over the old, which cut through about an inch deep at first, increasing to three inches, marking the exact size of each step and the width of the wagon tire.

The toilsomeness of this march can not be imagined by any one who is inexperienced in frontier life. We could hardly make a mile an hour. The horses were tired and discouraged, and frequently stopped, mutely but expressively appealing to their master for relief. Then, by urging, they would again push ahead, again to repeat the same operation.

We were wet, cold, and hungry, and exposed to a biting North wind, which had the whole length of Lake Michigan, only five or six miles distant, to gather its force.

That day's ride is one never to be forgotton while life lasts. All the actors in such perilous frontier scenes as I have detailed in this chapter will appreciate them and be able to realize the joy we felt that night around a bright log-cabin fire. They will also appreciate our enjoyment of the hot supper and warm beds.

For a while I will give the reader an opportunity for similar enjoyment.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

"This project will set us all right."
"But what if she objects?"
"Why, then, she dare not."

The kaleidoscope simile is again introduced to illustrate the change in scenes, characters, and events brought forward in this chapter. This simile is more appropriate than that of a panorama, for that represents a regular succession of scenes, while those of this story, although connected by one chain, are so often shifted that the links are sometimes obscured.

In a panorama, as for instance that of the Mississippi, there is one continuous leading feature. It commences in the snowy region, amid wild forests, traverses lakes and prairies, exhibiting Indians and animals of the chase, such as abound in Minnesota. Upon the water, birch-bark canoes and flocks of birds are seen. Then, in their order come log-cabins, farms, mills, roads, bridges, villages, cities, steamboats, intermixed with corn-fields, orchards, broad strips of wheat and grass, with herds of cattle, barns, and stacks. Anon, we see plantations of cotton, sugar-cane, and orange groves, and gangs of negroes, and almost fancy we can hear the snap of the overseer's whip. Then we look again and we are debouching into the gulf of Mexico.

That is a panorama. To this my story bears no resemblance. Hence I have compared its shifting scenes to the kaleidoscope. You turn that, the view is changed, the colors remain, but they are in a new form. You turn a leaf here and you leave the perils of frontier life, frontier scenes, and frontier stories, and you are far away in the nursery that has furnished the active life of many of the frontier settlements.

New-England is the place where men and women are born. The Great West is where they are developed. There they have ample room to expand. Perhaps it is because this story was developed there that it has so much expanded. Be patient, reader, it is not endless.

You may remember how it was stated in the postmaster's letter, that "Abel Atwater's oldest sister married a Sidney." When the seducer of Elfrenda left Connecticut for Western Virginia, his wife and one child remained. He never returned to them. That son when he grew toward manhood took up the occupation of a pedler as the easiest way he could support his feeble mother. In his travels he stopped frequently at Deacon Atwater's. The result was "a sort of love match." The fruit of that match was a son, who became an almost inseparable companion of his cousin Fortune, the child of Abel and Leveretta. Edward Algernon was the imposing name of the Sidney portion of this firm. Fortune furnished the capital, and acted as though his fortune of a few thousand dollars would endure as long as his name. As soon as he was able to take it into his own hands, he began the process of dissipating it, with his cousin's ready assistance.

These boys were nice specimens of those who grow up without parental restraint. Edward's father continued his roving life, leaving his son to the care of a mother, who was like many a mother of an only child. If the laxity of discipline at home was not sufficient to ruin him, it was fully made up in the months spent at his grandfather's, in company with Fortune, and an indulgent maiden aunt. This was their condition in school-boy days, and at "high school." It is not remarkable that these boys grew up reckless of much that constitutes the nobility of manhood.

When gambling, drinking, and their accompaniments had exhausted most of Fortune's money, and placed him in a condition to lose the remainder of his property by the foreclosure of a mortgage, instead of stopping his wicked career of a spendthrift, he proposed to his companion an act of infamy to retrieve their fortunes and put them again flush in funds.

"I tell you what it is, Ed., I have got a project that will set us all right. There's my little puss of a sister, out in Ohio, has got bags of dollars and no end to land, which my father bought for little or nothing when he first went West. Now, that has come to be very valuable, and it is all really my property, because it was bought with money which my father took from here, and which I should now have, if it had been left where it belonged. Half of it is mine anyway, but as I had enough here I have never said anything about it, and old Scott and his wife and this girl have been living upon my property for years. I don't want to say anything about dividing to Indiana, because I rather like her. She is confounded good-looking, and smart as need be. She writes a letter that no Yankee school-ma'am could beat. Now, Ed., I'll tell you what my project is; we'll go out to Ohio on a visit, you know, and you'll fall in love with Indiana and marry her, and we'll divide the spoils. What say; I'll pay expenses; you'll get a real sweet little Buckeye, and your half will be as much as you'll need. I'll take the other and clear off this intolerable mortgage of old Shylock—I wish it was a penitentiary offence to sue a man for debt. What say, Ed., will you go in for it, eh?"

"Well, yes, I 'spose so. Any thing you say. But supposing this pretty sister of yours should object to this arrangement; what then?"

"Why, then, she dare not. Or rather, on old Scott's account, she will not; and he dare not advise her to such a course, if he does, I have got his fingers in a vice and I will turn the screw, see if I don't. To tell you the truth I don't like him any too well for lecturing me about my habits. What are my habits to him. Tell you what 'tis, Ed., no man shall preach to me about what I do, or ought to do. That's my business. I've had enough of being kept under by my respected grandfather, now, happily departed to bliss, and my dearly-beloved aunt, Esterella—Heaven rest her soul—who thought it their special mission on earth to watch after the dear orphan boy, and snub him every time he had an aspiration above a toad. Yes, Ed., I've been the toad under the harrow long enough here in this puritanical old Connecticut. Now I am going to hop, and I'll take you on my back. In just two weeks I'll be ready. So, my fine fellow, if you've got any knitting work to do, you'd better be at it."

"Don't you think, Fortune, that is rather a short notice. If we are going on a bird-catching business, we must trim up our own feathers a little. If the Scott's are stiffish and Sunday-go-to-meeting sort of folks, I'll be stiff to, and as puritanical as our old grandfather. I can play at that game also. You stock the cards, I'll cut at the mark; you deal, and I'll pretend to go it alone."

"As I shall win of course, I will go snacks in the winnings, honor bright. I shall have to go and say good-by to mother, and ditto to the old man, if he is about, and then as soon as I can victimize somebody for a new set of rigging, I am at your service."

This illustrates the character of the two "young gentlemen" who alighted at Scott's door a month after this conversation, and were welcomed as relatives by the open hand and heart of a generous, "whole-souled man," as Scott was termed by his neighbors. Mrs. Scott, too, was not any the less cordial in her reception, being naturally genial, kind, and hospitable, and as the young men were good-looking, well dressed, and possessed of the outward appearance of gentlemen, with pleasing manners, she naturally liked them. They were intelligent too in their conversation, which is always a good passport with women who are fond of society. They had, in changing their clothes, carefully laid aside all that was unamiable, as exhibited in their conversation. It was as much a part of their plot to obtain a prize under false pretences, as it was in the case of the pirates.

Indiana was not at home when they arrived, and would not be until the next day, so that it devolved upon her mother to make them feel welcome. It was through this that she became interested in their conversation. It was perfectly natural that the thought should come into her mind, "wouldn't Edward make a good match for Indiana?" Perhaps it was because he was in strong contrast with some of the rough young men of that new country. Yet, rough as they were, they had sterling worth. Between Indiana and one of this class there had been some interchange of regard, which, probably led her mother to the above thought. The appearance of Edward was much in his favor, and as much against his rival. In this, then, he had already accomplished an important step in the siege he intended to lay to Indiana's heart. He had gained the strong outpost of the citadel—a mother's watchfulness over an only daughter. Could he now carry the citadel itself. That was a question soon to be solved, as Fortune had declared that their visit must terminate in just four weeks from their arrival; part of which was to be spent in "seeing the Buckeye State." Within that time, "this little matter of business" must be settled, for his own affairs would imperatively require his attention in Connecticut.

The next day Indiana arrived, radiant in blooming health and beauty, from a ride of twenty-five miles on horseback. She had been upon the same errand that her mother was when her father met her for the first time. That is, to visit the sick bed of one of her grandfather's old slaves, who had been her nurse in infancy.

With an apt faculty for story-telling, and the garrulity of her class, the old woman had told Indiana the whole history of "Uncle Daniel," and his early love, and who was his affianced, together with the story of her father and mother. This by way of explanation of what follows.

When she reached home her brother and cousin were out, and her mother, in telling her, expatiated flatteringly in favor of Edward and his accomplishments. Indiana said afterward that the moment she recalled the name of Sidney, and that Edward derived his sirname from the one that old Chloe had been telling her about, a chill ran through her veins, which was greatly increased an hour later when he returned and was introduced to her, showing evidently by his manner that the cause of his absence was to be found in a certain tavern, a mile or two distant. This at a time of active temperance reform, would have been sufficient in itself to put the young man out of Indiana's good graces, for she had been among the leading spirits of that reform in the orbit where she moved. Coupling the disgust she felt at an act so unbecoming in a young man, as drinking raw whisky in a low tavern, with the prejudice already formed against the name from old Chloe's story, it was with difficulty that she could treat him during the first evening with proper respect. such as a stranger, and her brother's relative was properly entitled to receive.

Fortune had been more careful, or else was better able to indulge in his potations without showing their effect; so that Indiana could not be prejudiced against him on that account, yet she could not feel anything like a real cordial sisterly affection. In his company she certainly was not happy, and in a long conversation with her mother that night, after every other member of the family was in bed, she told her that she felt a foreboding of evil, which it was more and more confirmed upon her mind was to come from these two young men. Her mother tried every argument that she could adduce to overcome this feeling without producing the slightest effect. Why should it? for as Indiana said, it was no art of hers that brought it upon her mind, and no art could remove it. She could give no reason for the chill that had come upon her first at the bare mention of the name, and next at the slight touch of the hand of Edward, nor could she tell why she did not and could not love her brother Fortune, nor why she suspected he had come with no honest intent to make this visit.

Of the intent of the conspirators she did not remain long in ignorance, for her brother seeing that Edward was not making much progress in his wooing undertook negotiations himself. His manner of doing it did not set matters forward, nor improve him in the estimation of his sister.

"Now India, you little fool, what in thunder are you so coy for with Ed.? Don't you see that he is in real earnest?"

"Earnest for what? I do not understand you. Please remember, brother, that I have had no advantage of a fashionable education at the East."

"Nonsense! What is the use of your beating about in this way. When you have a good breeze why not fill your sails and bowse ahead?"

"Oh, brother, you are entirely too nautical for a poor ignorant backwoods girl. I can not understand."

"Now, look here! You had better not oblige me to talk so plain that you will understand."

Indiana reported this conversation and the manner of its delivery to her mother; particularly the close, when Fortune went off, evidently quite out of temper. For the first time Mrs. Scott's eyes began to unclose and see the danger, in the same light that Indiana had at first.

"Depend upon it, mother, these two young men are, as we have heard before, dissipated spendthrifts; and I fear that Fortune has run through his property, and is now in pursuit of what was left to me. Perhaps he thinks the easiest way to obtain it would be through a match with his cousin Edward. I say *his* purposely, for I do not claim any relationship. I fear that I shall wish that I had none with Fortune. I am sure he has never seemed like a brother to me, and now he does not act like one."

"Oh dear, mother, what shall I do? I dread to be alone with either of them. I do wish that I had accepted the invitation of Dr. Evans and Aunt Luenda, and gone to Lynchburg, so as to have been out of the way when this visit occurred."

"My dear, if your suspicions have any foundation that would have availed you nothing, for the young gentlemen could have gone there as easily as come here. I think it better that the visit has occurred where you have your father and mother to protect you. I advise you not to try to avoid a private interview. If there is any intent upon Edward's part to make a declaration, as you suspect, the sooner it is done the better, as you will then be relieved of his presence and importunity. Only determine to meet the ordeal calmly, and your trouble will soon be over. But after all, I cannot believe, without the strongest proof, that Fortune is so base as you suspect. How is it possible for a brother to urge a sister to make a match that her soul abhors for the purpose of enabling him to get the control of her property?"

Mrs. Scott was destined to see the proof of this villainy much sooner than she anticipated.

When Fortune left in an angry mood, after the conference with his sister, he sought his cousin, and at once entered upon a conversation about a matter which seemed to absorb all his other faculties.

"I'll tell you what it is, Ed., I am tired of this child's play. I want you to bring this haughty beauty to understand that you mean business. I am not going to be treated another day in the way she seems to think very cunning. I have just been talking with her and she pretends she don't understand plain English language. You may believe I told her how I would make her understand. I have always been snubbed about having my own way ever since I can remember, but I am not going to be bluffed off now. If she don't accept your offer at once, and that with a better show of good manners than she has given us yet, I will make a beggar of her I had it on my tongue's end to tell her so this morning, the proud, haughty, arrogant beauty. But beauty without money won't amount to much, with such puritanical notions as she has got. Her face would be a fortune to a girl with liberal ideas. For her to talk to me about temperance and signing the pledge, and all that sort of nonsense, it makes me so mad I can hardly hold in. I wouldn't do it only for policy. But I am not going to live this way any longer. If you ever intend to do anything I want you to do it. If not, I will do my own business. Now, what will you do?"

"Why, if you'll give a fellow time."

"Give you time; confound you. Why, I could have courted and married three girls in the time you have already wasted. A good-looking young man as you are has only to ask any girl right squarely, and she will say yes, unless she has already said it to some other fellow. If that is the case with Indiana, I want to know it, and who he is, and I will put a flea in his ear that will tell him she isn't quite so rich as she pretends to be."

"Your impetuosity will spoil everything, if you ain't more prudent. It is always getting you into some scrape. It is that that makes you always lose when you play. Can't you learn to keep cool?"

"Cool, no! Not when I am surrounded with red-hot impudence. I am determined that this proud girl shall yield to my wishes, and I know what will make her do it, and old Scott knows, and I know that he is shaking in his boots every day that I am here, and wishing me away every hour, and he nor his wife won't oppose this match, and the compromise that they could make by it about property. Now, all you have to do is to put the question in plain English to Indiana. She will pretend to blush and simper as girls all do, and tell you that she must consult her mother, and her mother will consult her husband, and he will pretend that he isn't quite willing on account of the difficulty about the property, it is all tangled together in such a way that he don't know how to untangle it. Then I shall be consulted, and will propose that he shall pay a certain sum, and you and I and your wife shall sign a quit-claim for all the rest of it, and that will end the matter. Of course he will cheat us, but we shall get the ready money, and that is what we want, and we will take it and be off."

"And do you propose that I shall marry the girl, and get her money, and then be off and leave her? If you think that I am fool enough to do that, you will find that you have waked up the wrong passenger."

"I should like to know what in thunder you want to encumber yourself with a wife for? But that is your business. You are to have the wife and half the money. You may do just what you please with both. If you like you can buy or build a log-cabin, get a pig, cow, horse, chickens and a gun, and set up as an independent Buckeye farmer. But first I want you to attend to your part of the contract and get the wife. And I want you, do you understand, to make the proposition before you sleep to-night. Here we are, more than half our time gone and nothing done yet in the way of business. Will you do it? say yes or no, so that I may know what to depend upon."

"Well, then, yes, but I am afraid you are hurrying matters too much."

"Now, don't provoke me till I begin to swear. I'll risk results, if you'll go ahead."

Edward had good reasons for not wishing to "risk results." He felt, probably, as much real affection for Indiana as it was possible for such a character to feel. It must be readily seen that all the finer feelings of nature had been obliterated from Fortune's bosom, through lack of parental control in youth, and by the indulgence in the worst class of dissipation, and association with demoralizing companions, until he had come to look upon female beauty and loveliness as a mere merchantable commodity. Edward's nature was not yet quite so depraved. He had a mother, who did exercise some little restraint over his youth. Under the influence of such a nature as Indiana, he might yet be restored, so that he could, at least, respect himself. His heart already had begun to feel and love that influence, and he abhorred the mercenary motives of Fortune, and despised the suggestion to marry, obtain her money, and then "be off" and abandon her.

He feared the result of haste, and a mistimed proposition. He had sense enough to see that he was not a favorite with Indiana, yet he hoped in time to change her feelings, but Fortune, with the same impetuous nature that had brought "I will," and "I won't," so often to his tongue's end in boyhood, was determined to have his will now, and had it—we shall see with what result.

Edward found the opportunity to make his declaration to Indiana, much easier than he expected, because until now she had for several days carefully avoided being alone with him, because a few words he had spoken to her one day while out on horseback had opened her eyes to his intentions. It was the advice of her mother that led her to change her course, and let him say what he desired, and then answer him in a way that would put his mind at rest forever. This she did mildly, firmly, and with an air that at once satisfied him that he had not a ray of hope.

"My heart," she said, "is not, as you suggest, preengaged, and I do not think that yours is much more engaged in the proposition you have just made. Forgive me, if I wrong you in my doubts of your sincerity. From what I have learned by Fortune's conversation, aided by some other circumstances, I cannot help believing that you and he have conspired together to accomplish an object, and that I am to be the victim. If I am also wrong in this suspicion I beg your pardon. But independent of all this, cousin Edward, I never can be your wife. So please do not ever hint such a thing again, for this decision is utterly irrevocable. Now, let us part in friendship. I will forget all that you have said, and you must do the same by me. Good-night."

"Oh do not leave with such an ill opinion of my motives. Believe me I am not the base creature your suspicions have painted me. I assure you I love you sincerely; and better now than ever before. Pray give me an opportunity to plead my cause."

"Oh no; why should I? It is better for you that I do not. Besides, if any wrong was intended, I forgive all, and will forget all, everything, but that you are my cousin and not my lover. Once more, good-night."

And this closed the door and barred it forever against this villainous design of getting possession of Indiana's property by an act of matrimony.

Indiana went immediately to her room, which was adjoining that of the two young men. She could not help overhearing loud conversation. Perhaps she had overheard it before. She certainly heard it now in a manner that fully confirmed her in the opinion of a conspiracy to obtain money by first gaining her consent to marry her cousin. She could only hear Fortune's voice; he spoke loud and angrily, but she knew by his words that he was requiring Edward to relate the particulars of the interview, and she was shocked to hear him curse Edward for a fool, and herself as a purse-proud, haughty, unfeeling flirt. He talked as though she had been guilty of a crime in refusing this proposition, which would bring ruin upon him, but he would teach her that she had ruined herself.

It is quite needless to say that Indiana spent an almost sleepless and altogether wretched night. Whenever she closed her eyes she was completely environed with serpents twining about her in the most hideous manner. It was late in the night before she ceased to hear the angry tones of her brother's voice, though she could distinguish but few words. Some of these alarmed her beyond conception.

She heard him say, with a terrible oath, "old Scott shall account for every cent of this property, for it was all my father's, and I will law them till they are all as poor as I am."

Indiana rose early and went to her mother's room. Scott was an early riser, and was just going out to ride away, but stopped to kiss his "little darling."

"Oh father do not go. I beg of you to come back for ten minutes. I was going to talk with mother, but I want you particularly."

She then related minutely all the particulars of the previous evening, and expressed her fears of impending evil. She knew the exact condition of the property, for her father had concealed nothing, though she could not exactly comprehend all the legal technicalities.

Nathan Atwater, as guardian of Fortune, had fully agreed to the settlement of the estate of Abel, according to the copy of his will, exactly as though it had been the original; and agreed that his ward should sign a quit-claim to Indiana as soon as he was of age. Unfortunately before that time he died. It was believed that Fortune did not know there was a flaw in the will, but it is now supposed that a mischievous lawyer in the county had discovered it and written to him in hopes of making a fee. Scott felt perfectly safe in the settlement that he made of the estate, because the Connecticut portion was worth more at the time of Abel's death than the Ohio portion, and the two children were equally entitled, besides the dower of the wife.

It was Scott's judicious management that had increased the value of the property, besides its natural increase. He had made it an object worth coveting by a spendthrift, who had wasted his own inheritance.

In the conference between the two, at Indiana's suggestion and solicitation it was agreed that she should try to ascertain the extent of Fortune's embarrassments, and propose to relieve him upon condition that he would sign a quit-claim to the remainder. This she concluded to do, but at breakfast he announced his intention of terminating his visit that day, alleging that he had received a letter the evening before which made it imperatively necessary that he should return to Connecticut immediately. Then she thought that she could say all she had to say by letter easier than by mouth, and so they parted. There was no time for conversation, as the stage would pass in an hour after breakfast.

When Fortune said, "Good-by," he added, "you'll repent of this thing yet."

Edward's farewell was really affectionate. It was painfully evident that he was not the greatest villain of the two.

Three days afterward the family was surprised to hear by a neighbor who had been to the county town that Fortune and Edward were still there. The cause of their delay was made manifest a few days later by a visit from the sheriff, who came to serve writs upon Mr. Scott, indorsed Atwater vs. Scott, in three distinct suits, one of which charged him with malfeasance as administrator of Abel Atwater; another an action of trover and conversion; and a third a suit in ejectment against every acre of real estate or house in his possession.

The demands looked formidable, but the sheriff said he understood there was a chance for compromise, and handed Scott a letter directed to him from Fortune. Here it is:

"SIR: I feel it due, more to myself than to you, to explain the cause of my sudden departure and present proceedings.

"Owing to some unfortunate speculations, my affairs in Connecticut had become slightly embarrassed, and required a little ready money to redeem a mortgage.

"Knowing you to be in possession of a large amount of my father's property, I thought I would come here not to claim my own, but to ask you for a loan sufficient to save me from ruin.

"I was cordially welcomed by your wife and daughter, but I soon found that my presence was very distasteful to you. I saw plain enough that you felt very much as I suppose a receiver of stolen goods must feel with a detective officer in the house. Your cold, smooth-faced, hypocritical politeness, did not deceive me. But it closed the door against any attempt at negotiation.

"In the mean time, I perceived that Edward had become deeply enamored of Indiana, and that she was about equally affected toward him, and as you pretended to hold the property for her, as heir of my father, I thought that, of course, you would be ready to relinquish a part of it upon her marriage, and I therefore favored the courtship, knowing as I did that I could obtain a loan of Edward, as he knew it was in reality my property. This affair progressed to the mutual satisfaction of the lovers, until the night before I left, when she, following your advice, or more probably your orders, dismissed him in the most insulting manner, forbidding him even to think of anything that had ever passed between them. If she had given him the faculty of forgetting, it would have been all very well; but as she did not, she has made him miserable forever, and on his account I would be willing to enter into a compromise. I therefore make this proposition: You and your wife to withdraw your opposition to this match; allow it to be consummated at once, and at the same time pay over to her husband three thousand dollars cash, and seven thousand in one, two, and three years, and you shall have a full release from each of us for all further demands.

"The sum demanded, I have ascertained, is not one-fifth the value of what is due me, but my counsel, Alex. McVarden, esq., to whom I refer you, urges me to be lenient, in consideration of what you have done to enhance the value of the property.

"If you do not accept this reasonable—indeed, generous—proposition, the suits which I have instituted must go on, and the hardest fend off, is all I have got to say. I shall wait here until to-morrow for your answer."

"Tell him," said Scott, "he need wait for nothing but a horse-whipping, which I intend to give him upon the first opportunity."

"That is," said the sheriff, "just what I told McVarden I would do, and I would include him in the same suit, the mischief-making villain. I believe if he was out of the way we should not have one suit where we have ten now in this county. Do you think you have any reason to fear the result of any of these vexatious actions?"

"Yes, there is always cause to fear unprincipled villains, and courts that must be governed by law and not equity."

At dinner-time, Scott explained to his wife and daughter the cause of the sheriff's visit. Indiana at once begged them to allow her to offer herself as the sacrifice necessary to save them from a deal of vexation, and perhaps in the end the loss of their home. This proposition they would not listen to in any possible form it could be put, and beside, Scott said that he did not suppose that Fortune would attempt to claim anything beyond one-half of the property owned by his father at the time of his death, and in that the wife would hold her right of dower, if the will should be wholly set aside. This would still give them a home as long as they lived, and something to spare. Then a jury would of course assess the value as it was at Indiana's birth, and not now, and then they would inquire into the value of the Connecticut property, which Fortune had already had, and beside all, it was not improbable that the court would order the whole matter settled upon equitable principles according to the will of her father.

When Scott first returned from Tippecanoe, if he had acted upon the certainty that Abel was dead and settled his estate at once, it would have been impossible now to dispossess him after having had peaceable possession beyond the limitation of time fixed by law. With honest motives and with still a faint hope that the lost would be found, the settlement was deferred year after year, and this circumstance was seized upon by the unprincipled claimants as evidence of his intention to convert the whole to his own use.

McVarden at once commenced his peculiar system of tactics of talking the matter over in presence of every friend of Scott until he could get him to say something to disqualify him as a juror, or rather to give him grounds to challenge him if he should be called. By this course, none but the ignorant, stupid, vicious, or prejudiced portion would be left to act as judges in a matter of such vital importance. As he kept his tactics all concealed from Scott and his attorney, it was impossible to prepare anything ahead to meet the case.

Mr. Williams, the counsel that Scott had employed, made frequent visits to the family to make himself thoroughly acquainted with all that related to their history.

It must be also acknowledged that he was very much interested in Indiana, of whom he made his wife almost jealous by the declaration that she was "the handsomest and most intelligent and sensible young lady he had ever seen."

It was still nearly five months to the term of the court—ample time to prepare if they had known what to prepare for. As it was, they all trusted in the right of their cause, having a firm reliance upon the Great Dispenser of justice, and rested easy as it is possible for innocent people to rest under a wicked accusation of doing or intending wrong

Mr. Williams was indefatigable in his study of the case. He examined records and consulted authorities, and looked up witnesses to prove the value of the property now and at the time it came into the possession of Scott.

"I could throw them higher than the clouds, if it was not for one thing," he said, or rather thought aloud, at one of his visits at Scott's, where his wife had become reconciled that he should go since he had introduced her, for she, like everybody else that knew Indiana, had become deeply interested in her and "the great lawsuit."

"And what is that one thing?" replied Scott.

"A plea at the proper moment, taking them by surprise, of course, that Abel Atwater is not dead, and therefore his son has no right as heir to his property. The little objection to this is that you have married his widow. Of course, they could not prove the death, and we should have their fingers in a trap; but I suppose this would only postpone the final issue. They could take a nonsuit, or get an adjournment, which courts generally allow whenever parties are taken by surprise, or where justice seems to demand time for getting witnesses to some new matter arising from one party springing a trap on an opponent. I shall claim the same right in case of any new development in the trial. The trouble now is that I cannot tell what their case is, as it is not necessary to file a declaration more than ten days before court, and even then, it may be drawn in such a way that we are kept in the dark upon all minor matters and the course the plaintiff intends to pursue about evidence."

"Then you think the suit a very doubtful one?"

"To tell you the truth, I do. I do not quite see how we shall keep this fellow out of a share of this property, equal to his sister, unless he is disposed to settle honorably and allow for what he has already had. But I am sorry to say that is a broken reed, and won't do to lean upon. I am afraid to interpose it as a plea, for fear they will retort that Fortune never received it; that it fell into the hands of his uncle and was wasted, and that you, as administrator of the estate, are responsible for this waste. It seems to me that you acted, though not legally, yet strictly like an honest man, and settled the estate according to the known will of the deceased, in which all parties have acquiesced until now, when this spendthrift, having got rid of his share, comes and wants a new division. I do not exactly see our way out of this maze of the law. But I will do my best, depend upon it."

"Do you think we had better offer a compromise?"

"I think it would be better for you if a compromise could be effected, but I am afraid to make the offer to McVarden. He would say at once that we felt our case hopeless."

"Shall I write to Fortune?"

"No; that is equally objectionable. If Indiana can be persuaded to write to him and say that she does it without your knowledge, just to ask the question how much money he will accept and discontinue proceedings, it might develop something serviceable."

This was agreed upon, and Mr. Williams undertook to suggest to Indiana to do so, and that she should keep the fact from her father, and then she could truthfully say that she did it without his knowledge.

In due time she got an answer "that the only variation from his former terms, was that her father should pay all the costs, my lawyer included, and be ready to hand over the money, with the marriage certificate, when he should have an everlasting quitclaim, as well from Edward and his wife as from himself." He then congratulated Indiana upon the prospect of her coming to her senses, and escaping from the tyranny she had lived under so long; since "Edward was one of the worthiest of young men, and would make an excellent husband." And if she refused this offer now, it would never be renewed, and in less than one year she would be glad to beg of him a shelter for her homeless head, as he should "take every cent that old Scott possessed, without one iota of remorse."

Indiana went to her father and mother with the open letter in her hand and a copy of her own, and offered freely to make the sacrifice to save her parents.

"It is solely on our account, is it?" said both Mr. and Mrs. Scott; "you are sure that you have no desire toward this match?"

"Oh no; it is repugnant to every thought; yet I will make it freely, and perhaps thus reform Edward and be the means of doing a great good. Still, I am free to own that I would gladly escape the trial."

"And so you shall. Let the Jew take his pound of flesh, but not one drop of your life-blood. Even if he could take all, instead of half the property, I would give it up and go out to days'-work to support you and your mother, sooner than sell you as a slave to this monster of iniquity."

That evening Mr. Williams called and read the letter, and quietly folded and put it in his pocket.

"I shall want you in court, Miss Indiana, to identify this letter. I will read it to the jury. It is worth all I could say in two hours. It is capital for us. By the by, Scott, I think they are going to make a point about your delaying for seven years to administer on the estate, and not until you married Mrs. Atwater."

"Why, sir, until then I had no claim to do so as next of kin, and more than that, we had no evidence of Abel's death. It was only presumption, at last."

"And is so still. I have a good mind to move for a postponement of the trial, and take out a commission to go to Indiana and collect evidence. Who knows what might be discovered. I have got through more desperate suits than this by pure accident—something wholly unexpected. I had a dream last night that this would be the case now."

"I hope we shall not have to rely upon dreams to defeat these desperate villains," said Scott.

"Why, father, I have relied all my life upon one dream—I rely upon it still—the dream of my father upon the battle-field of Tippecanoe. Depend upon it, Providence will send that unknown friend to destroy the serpent that is entwining us in its folds."

The story of the dream was then related to Mr. Williams, who listened attentively, and then said:

"By the heavens! this is most wonderful. I dreamed that a stranger came and told me something that saved this case. I think I should know his face if I met him now, it made such an impression upon my mind. Miss Indiana, I agree with you. Let us trust in Providence and wait. Good bye."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

I shall try to convince the jury that it is law. I will tell you why before we part.

They did wait, patiently, anxiously, and some of them hopefully, during the few weeks that intervened between the interview mentioned in the last chapter and the time of trial in "the great suit of Atwater vs. Scott."

Mr. Williams had given his thoughts so exclusively to this matter that his mind seemed to be completely absorbed in its study. In this mood he was on his way to the county seat the evening before the day set for the trial. He was not in his usual jolly mood. He had studied the case until he had come to the conclusion it was a bad one.

He was still studying it as he drove his wagon along the new country road, which was about as rough as the matter he was pondering. Still, he could get over the road, but he could not see how he was to get over some legal obstructions.

He would have been quite willing now to compromise with the opposite party for the sum he could have claimed at the time of his father's death, waiving all questions in regard to the Connecticut property. As it was, viewing the matter upon every side, he could not see a ray of light to give him hope of saving his client from a verdict.

"Still," he mused to himself, "I will trust in Providence, and it is some consolation that if Scott has to give up half, he will still have quite a comfortable sum left. I shall work like a beaver to have the division made upon the original, not the present value. I believe that is justice, and I shall try to convince the jury that it is law. I know that the judges all feel a strong inclination to favor Scott, about as far as the law allows. That is one point in our favor. I think," said he, speaking aloud, without looking up from his papers, "I shall be able to go ahead if I see no obstruction in the road."

"I think so too," said a voice close by his side, "but unfortunately for you and me to, you may see an obstruction in the road, and that you can not go ahead."

"God be thanked," said Mr. Williams, still talking to himself, "Providence *is* on our side."

The gentleman who confronted him, thought he had met a crazy man. Mr. Williams bit his tongue, partly in revenge for uttering his thoughts aloud, and partly to ascertain whether he was really awake or only dreaming; for there within ten feet of him, stood the stranger of his dream, whom he had recognized, as he told Indiana he thought he should, at the first glance. Hence his incoherent exclamation.

"Sir, I beg your pardon," he hastened to say to the stranger, "I did not thank God for your accident. I will tell you why I did so before we part. I do thank God that I am here to assist you. You have broken an axle I see, and you will have a hard time to get it repaired immediately, for we have a most exciting trial coming on in the morning at the town a mile ahead. You will find that all the workmen would rather be spending their time in the court-house than in their shops. However, we will do the best we can for you. I think you are a stranger in these parts."

"Yes, I am from Indiana, and want to go about a hundred miles further. Do you think I can hire a wagon and leave mine to be repaired, until I return?"

"Why, yes, I dare say you may. Indeed, I will say yes, positively, for if no other one is to be had you shall have mine."

"You are certainly exceedingly kind—quite a different man from what I took you for when you drove up."

"Ha, ha, I do not wonder. I was talking to myself, was I? Well, well, I will tell you all about it by-and-by. No doubt you will laugh, or else you will agree with me and 'Trust in Providence.' Come, we will now get your luggage into my wagon, and put yours out of the road, so that I can get by on this side. I will send Thompson's man down for it in the morning, and have it taken to the shop. I do not believe you will want to go on after I have told you my story. If you do you shall have a chance. Now, pray tell me what sort of a man did you take me for?"

"Well, to be candid, I thought you must be crazy, to drive right up to a broken wagon that you could not pass, still talking as you did about going ahead, without appearing to see any obstruction, and when you did realize it, you were ready enough to rejoice to find your way blocked."

"All of which had not one single idea connected with your wagon. I was thinking of my case in court, in a sort of abstracted mood, and spoke out aloud. Then, when I saw your face, I thanked Providence, for in it I saw the fulfillment of a remarkable dream I had some weeks since. Have you, sir, ever had anything happen to you that seemed to be by special Providence and not by any act of your own?"

"Certainly! This very meeting is one of the cases. What should I have done if you had not come along, and come with a disposition to act the part of the good Samaritan? I have had many similar interpositions in the course of my life."

"I believe some men are always subject to such acts. I trust this is one that you will never regret. Well, here we are at Thompson's, and none too soon, for it is getting dark."

Upon applying for lodging, the stranger was assured "there was not a bed, nor half a bed in the house."

"Oh, yes, there is, said Mr. Williams, "carry the luggage up to my room. I will see that the gentleman has half a bed, at any rate. You can give us some supper, I suppose."

"Certainly, certainly, squire; and I am much obliged to you for taking the stranger in. It was his last chance in this town to-night. Every house is full."

"He is not half as much obliged to you as I am," said the traveler.

"We will see about that," replied Mr. Williams, "after supper. Who knows but I shall be most obliged. The ways of Providence are mysterious."

When they went up to their room after supper, the stranger said, "you are a lawyer, I perceive. It is not your own suit then, but a client's that occupied your mind so completely?"

"That is a fact. Come, sit down. Do you smoke? No, then we are agreed upon that point. It will give us the more time to talk. I have a case that is to be tried to-morrow that has excited my mind more than any other that I ever undertook. I do not know what information you can give, if any, about it, but it was while deeply absorbed in thinking about this matter that I dreamed a stranger came to me, and gave some information that saved me from the utter defeat that I anticipated. The cause of my sudden exclamation, when I looked up from my fit of abstraction, was simply this: I saw standing before me, as palpable to my senses as you are now, the exact representation of what I had seen in my dream. Now, what connection you have with me or my clients I will leave you to judge when I give you a few of the leading points.

"The plaintiff in this suit is a wild, reckless, unprincipled rascal from Connecticut, and his attorney is—well, in short, he is a disgrace to the profession. The defendant is one of the most worthy, honest, straightforward, sound-thinking men in Ohio, and his attorney is—a dreamer, who trusts to Providence, and looks to picking up strangers on the road to help him out of difficulties, that he cannot see the way through, except when he is dreaming.

"The father of the plaintiff was lost, literally lost, not killed, in the battle of Tippecanoe in 1811. For the matter of that, we do not know that he ever was killed, or that he died; but after seven years' absence, and many corroborating circumstances to prove his death, the court settled his estate upon the basis of a copy of his will. The original was lost with him.

"My client was the administrator, having married the widow, who had one child born after her father's loss, or death, we don't know which.

"By-the-by, are you a married man? No. Thank Providence again; not for your misfortune in that line, because you are old enough, and good-looking enough to have a wife. If you don't object, then, I want to introduce you to that child—a young lady now, of rare beauty, intelligence, and almost every quality of loveliness. I want her to see you, because she is a firm believer in remarkable interpositions of Providence in the affairs of life. I told her about my dream, and she will look upon your arrival as a confirmation of her belief.

"I think I shall have to go over to a friend's house, where she is staying, before I go to bed, and tell her that my dream-land is becoming real estate. You will like this girl if you get acquainted with her. You certainly must, since I find you are a bachelor, though I am somewhat surprised to learn that fact from you.

"I judged from the little silver in your hair that you were a married man, particularly as you must have been a remarkably handsome young fellow. I certainly shall introduce you to my young friend, young, although getting pretty well advanced into the marriagable age; and what is a little singular in this connection, she is named after your State, Miss Indiana Scott Atwater."

"Atwater! That is a familiar name. I have sufficient reasons for remembering that name, though I have scarcely thought of it for several years. But I interrupt you."

"Oh, not at all. But who knows but we shall see another special Providence in this matter. I assure you that if I was a bachelor I would pay my addresses to Miss Indiana, and no mistake. She is hand-same, naturally intelligent, well educated, amiable, pious, and if not robbed in this lawsuit, rich. With all these advantages, I think she is a good match for any good man.

"But to come back to my case, this man Atwater was the father of the plaintiff by a former wife. She was lost at sea."

"Lost at sea?"

"Well, yes, I suppose I may say so, though not exactly on the ocean. The son was then an infant. I think it a pity he had not gone with his mother; for after spending his portion of the property, he is now trying to get his sister's. To tell you the truth, entirely between you and me, however, I am afraid he will succeed. I really do not see how I am to head him off, unless my dream should come out true. You don't happen to have the original will in your pocket, do you? for that is about what I dreamed, that you brought it to me, having found it, you said, among the Indians. I do not wonder that you laugh at such queer fancies of the mind in sleep. But then, how shall we account for my seeing your face so plainly that I recognized it in a moment?

"That dream affected me so that I really had some serious thoughts of getting the case continued over one term, and making a journey into the Indian country, north-west of the Wabash, merely to see if Providence would direct me to something that would defeat this great iniquity. Not that I expected the stranger I saw in my dream would meet me, as he did in my sleep, with that all-important document. Indeed, I did not know what I should do, nor do I now. And I do not know that you know one iota about this case, having heard of it for the first time this evening; yet, ever since I met you in the road, I have been constantly impressed with the idea that I am going to succeed, and win this suit, but I have not the remotest idea how."

If the traveler was surprised to hear Mr. Williams's story, the latter was still more surprised when he heard that of the traveler. As it will be repeated to-morrow to another party I shall defer the recital of it here.

It was very late before the gentlemen went to bed. It was still later before Mr. Williams could go to sleep. He kept repeating, "wonderful! wonderful! wonderful!"

The next morning the broken wagon was brought up, but not a man could be found willing to repair it, while "the great trial" was proceeding. The general sympathy was strong for Scott and his family, but a great many who hoped he would succeed could not see how.

It was well for Fortune that he kept out of the way. Some of the people of the country swore that he should never live to carry a dollar away if he won the suit.

Scott and wife and daughter arrived the same evening that Williams did, and stopped at a friend's house, where they were always welcome. He was a good deal cast down, and would have been more so, if it had not been for the ever cheerful voice and pleasant face of Indiana. She determined to go with him into court, to stand by him there in the worst of his trials. Mrs. Scott begged to be excused. It would only awaken thoughts she had hoped were buried with her husband, long, long years ago.

When Indiana left home she asked permission to wear her mother's ring—that peculiar and seldom-worn ring.

It was an unusual request. Indiana could not tell why it was made, except "she was impelled to do so." It was the wedding-ring; the fac-simile of the one her father wore upon the battle-field; the one described by Scott to the men who hunted for the dead and wounded, by which they would know Abel if his body was found.

This ring had never been worn by Indiana, probably, three times in her life. Why did she desire to wear it now? Was it a mere freak of the mind? Perhaps so. Who can tell? Not I.

At length, after the usual bustle, noise, and confusion, and cries of silence in court, the court was ready for business. The judge said, "I suppose I need not ask you gentlemen if you are ready for trial, since this is the day of the term mutually agreed upon. I understand that you have also agreed to bring all the suits under one head, so as to save time and expense. Do you want a jury?"

Mr. Williams said that he should prefer to submit the matter to the Court. The plaintiff's attorney would not listen to such a proposition. "It was contrary to all rules of practice, and as his client was not present, he could not consent to any thing that would take the cause out of its regular course. He believed in the great American principle of juries."

All this, and much more in the same vein, was *ad captandum*, to make interest with those he hoped to get on the jury, which the sheriff proceeded to call. Williams did not object to a man, and the panel had been so judiciously selected by the sheriff that McVarden found he could not get any one off for cause, as he had hoped to do, so as to get on some of his own tools, which he had ready at hand. His questions and captious objections only served to prejudice the jury against him and his case. Finally, the jury was declared full and sworn, with much less delay than the court anticipated.

The opening speech of an attorney as unprincipled as McVarden, particularly in a Western Court at that day, was his grand occasion for display—to show off, so that he could afterward say to his bar-room companions, "Wa'n't I smart? Didn't I give the old fellow fits? Didn't I tell you there would be fun when the case came to trial?"

I can not attempt to follow this opening through its long hour of noisy harangue, but I can give the pith of it. When all the preliminaries were ready, Mac began to "spread himself," like a turkey-gobbler or barn-door cock, and then opened:

"May it please the Court, and you, gentle*men of the* jury: I am now going to fulfill my first duty to my client, by stating the plain facts in this case, all of which we can prove. Indeed, I do not know as it will be necessary to prove them, for I shall state nothing but what is so palpably true that the defendant must admit it to the very letter. By the records of the Probate Court of this county, which I will lay before the jury, they will see the amount of property administered upon by the defendent, not one dollar of which has he paid to the plaintiff, who is the *only* heir to the estate of Abel Atwater, who died in the glorious cause of his country upon the field of battle, whether by the bullet of a foe, or the hand of a pretended friend, I won't attempt to say, but I do say that the circumstances are very suspicious. Look at them. The plaintiff's father had intrusted the defendant with large sums of money to invest for him in Ohio lands—here are the letters to prove it—and being unable to get any return or any satisfaction for his money, he finally came himself. Instead of a settlement—instead of surrendering this property, the defendant coaxes his dupe away to Indiana, to make new investments—coaxes him to volunteer to join the forces of old Harrison, who was about starting upon one of his characteristic forays upon the poor Indians, to rob them of their lands, that he had pretended to buy the year before by a treaty with a few drunken rascals who never represented the nation. Well, in this expedition of a band of robbers, my client's father lost his life—the defendant only knows how. We only know that he came back and held possession of my client's property, and never offered to account for one cent of it to the rightful heir, who now comes into this Court to ask you for restitution—for that justice which he has been utterly unable to obtain from the defendant. Unable to *obtain!* Why he has been fairly driven out of the defendant's house—no, the plaintiff's house, but in adverse possession, simply because he came and demanded his own. It is true, he wrote to my client after this suit was commenced by his attorney's advice, or rather as a subterfuge, he caused *his* daughter to write to my client, offering to give him ten thousand dollars to discontinue and quit-claim. Of course, this petty, contemptible offer was rejected, and now I will show you why. The property we claim is worth this day more than fifty thousand dollars, for every cent that Daniel Scott possesses, belongs to my client. This I will show by the records of this Court, in a case of bankruptcy, where he gave up on oath every dollar he had in the world to his creditors, and was by them discharged. Ever since that he has lived upon the property of my client. All the wealth and appliances of comfort that surround the defendant and his family, even to the clothes upon their backs, and the beautiful gold rings upon *his* daughter's fingers, which she comes into court to brazenly flaunt in our faces, are the fruits of the robbery of my client.

"I see the worthy counsel of a worthy client, in a worthy cause, *par nobile fratum*, fidgeting in his chair, as though he wanted to interrupt me, because I have spoken of this young lady, who, I presume is herself innocent of the great villainy I am going to expose. I am truly sorry for her, and shall keep constantly in view the excellent Latin proverb—*Parcere personis, dicere de vitiis.**

"I cannot spare the exposure of a crime which has been part of the machinery by which my client has been kept out of his property all these long years. For twenty years he was unable to assert his own rights, for he was but an infant when his father died, and this defendant managed to have a guardian appointed over him, who would not prosecute, but on the contrary kept him in ignorance of the fact that his father left no will, *and no other heir*.

"Oh, you needn't wince. This truth too must come out. I repeat "no other heir than my client." That pretended marriage is all of a piece with that pretended will, which never was executed, and which the defendant never dared to pretend to offer, but in its stead gives a copy, thus cunningly avoiding the actual crime of forgery.

"When the defendant returned from the slaughter-field of my client's father, he found one of the victim's of his seductive arts, in a fair way to make her shame public, and the story was then started that she was the wife of Atwater, and when the child was born, that name was very modestly affixed to her true one by way of addendum, and she was made to stand as the heir of the large Atwater estate, which the defendant seized and has ever since held.

"Gentlemen of the jury, my learned friend here may tell you, and may introduce letters from my client to prove that he has always acknowledged this Miss Indiana Scott (I omit the addendum) as his sister. And well he might, for it was only last week that we discovered that her mother never was married to his father. At least we have presumptive evidence of that fact, for he lost his wife not a month before the battle of Tippecanoe, and it is not very probable that he would have taken another in the mean time, and she an entire stranger; and if he did, nobody knew it, nobody thought of it until he was dead and could not deny it. I have sought in vain for evidence of this marriage, and have not been able to find one iota. Of course, we cannot prove a negative. It falls upon my learned friend to prove the affirmative. Of course, if he has any, he is ready with his witnesses upon this point. I venture, however, to say they will never be produced. This fact, then, will stand confessed, that this girl is not the child of Abel Atwater, and consequently there is no heir beside my client to his estate, and it will only be necessary for the jury to ascertain its value, and that he has been wrongfully kept out of it by the cunning trickery of the defendant. I shall only call two or three witnesses to prove the value of this property, and that the defendant has always held it and represented it as not his own, but the estate of my client's father. Then I shall lay before you the records of this court, and the probate court, the tax collector and assessor's books, and ask at your hands a speedy verdict. We shall only ask of you to find that this property is the estate of Abel Atwater, and then the court will settle all the points of law. Here is a memorandum that will assist you in referring to the records, so that you may not have to look through all these ponderous volumes. I am sure that you will find the case a very easy one, notwithstanding present appearances.

"Perhaps I ought to call your attention to the fact that seven years were allowed to elapse before this sham settlement of the estate was made. Compare the date with the record in the bankruptcy case, Scott vs. John Doe et al., and you will see why. It then became necessary to have another owner to the property. Up to this time Scott had been living with the mother of this claimant of my client's estate, rather notoriously—unmarried. It was thought advisable, I suppose ,to put an end to that scandal, and the *soi-disant* 'widow Atwater' became the respectable Mrs. Daniel Scott.

"Now, sheriff, call Peleg Mason, Jethro Taylor, Noah Briggs, Jane Scavendale, and—well no matter for the others, unless it becomes necessary to call them for rebutting testimony if the defendant denies any of the facts I have stated, which I am sure he dare not."

"May it please the court," said Mr. Williams, springing to his feet the moment his opponent took his seat, "the gentleman talks about facts. What facts ? He has uttered the basest slanders upon my client and his innocent family—words, which if spoken anywhere else, in the presence of Daniel Scott or that of some of his numerous friends, would have cost the slanderer his life. I beg those friends, who I see are much excited, to remember that they are now in the temple of justice, and remember when they leave it that no good comes of violence; nor can any cause be prospered by his black, wicked lies—and whatever the result of this trial, remember that we are in the hands of Providence, who will protect the innocent from the tongue of any one who seeks to gain a cause by wickedly defaming his neighbor."

Mr. Williams found it necessary to "talk against time," as he had hurriedly dispatched Scott to his wife to inquire "What evidence she had of the marriage—who performed the ceremony—was there a marriage certificate given—where was it—who was present—where were they—and any other evidence that he could produce. About the lie of Atwater's wife dying only a month before he did, never mind that. I have a witness who will prove it was three or four years certain."

When Scott returned, Mr. Williams asked the indulgence of the court for fifteen minutes to consult his client. This Mac opposed vehemently, but the court granted it. If it had not, the people would have mutinied, they were so excited.

The judges talked together in a whisper, and every one could see by their countenances that they looked upon the case as almost hopeless for Scott.

The jury looked wise and said nothing, but several of them took occasion of the lull in business to put in an extra quid of tobacco, and a few of them went out to drink. Williams and Scott, after a few minutes whispering, were about to retire for further consultation to one of the ante-rooms, when the chief Judge spoke:

"Mr. Williams, it is now twelve o'clock. We will adjourn the court one hour for dinner. In the mean time have your witnesses ready, and we will dispatch business, as the plaintiff does not propose to have a very long examination. He has already taken up a good deal of time in his opening, and we shall ask him to be brief hereafter."

McVarden was in high spirits, notwithstanding the black looks cast at him as he went away to his dinner. If telegraphy had then been in use, he would undoubtedly have sent this message to his client:

"The case is ours. I have floored old Scott and dumfounded Williams. The court and jury are all with me. Some of Scott's friends are blacker than a thunder cloud. Who cares. Dam 'em. I have struck them all with lightning. I would not compromise now for fifty thousand dollars."

His excess of confidence rendered him arrogant, and blinded him to all consequences of injustice in pressing for a a verdict. It made him overlook some important particulars.

Scott and Indiana went gloomily to their lodgings, accompanied by Mr. Williams. As he was going out, he handed the key of his room to the stranger, saying: "I will return and see you before the court opens."

Mac saw and heard this. He had seen the man sitting by the table of counsel, and took him for some country lawyer. This act and the words of Williams excited his suspicions, and he immediately set one of his tools at work to find out who and what he was, and why he was here. If a witness, he wanted some ground upon which to attack him. His calm, dignified manner and intelligent look alarmed the villain.

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* "To be sparing of persons, and to lash their crimes." This is a precept of which the honest satirist should never lose sight. It is duty to lash vice in general terms. If he descends to personalities the world will attribute it to spleen against the individual, or perhaps to some less honorable motive. It did in the present case, for it said "Mac overshot the mark."

"My dear," said Mr. Williams to Indiana as they entered the house, "you see that Providence appears rather frowning just now. Do you still hope and trust?"

"Yes, with fully as much confidence as ever. It is impossible for me to believe such villany can ever succeed. I could bear the loss of property, even should this wicked Fortune rob us of all; but pray do not let that foul-tongued villain blast the name of my mother with such scandal. I thought I should choke; I really felt faint. By the by, who was that fine looking gentleman—indeed, he is genuinely handsome—who handed me the glass of water. I am sure I must have looked distressed thus to attract the attention of an entire stranger."

"Oh, he is a traveler who broke his wagon last night, and had to stop over to-day because no one will work until the verdict is given. Did you notice how excited the people were at Mac's speech. I think they would have liked to drag him out of court by the hair."

"I do not wonder. I felt wicked myself. But here comes father and mother. You want to talk with them."

This talk was not satisfactory. Mr. Williams ascertained that there were but three persons in the State who witnessed the marriage, neither of whom were available—Scott, because he was a party to the suit, (yet no living soul would dare doubt his word, notwithstanding the monstrous character given him that morning); Mrs. Scott, because she was Mrs. Scott, could not be a witness; and old Dinah, as pure and truthful a soul as ever lived, was of "African descent" and that disqualified her.

Oh law! Oh justice! Oh common sense! In some of the States the law is now a little better. It should be a national law that every man, woman and child, must be allowed to testify the truth; for truth is mighty and will prevail. The form of Slavery has been abolished—the body is dead; now let us lay its ghost.

"Was a certificate given? If so, where is it?" asked Mr. Williams.

"It was undoubtedly in Mr. Atwater's pocket-book at the time he was lost. I know that he did carry it there. I have never seen it since."

"By whom were you married?"

"Rev. Mr. Ives, a Methodist minister who was stationed on that circuit."

"Ah, then there is no hope of finding any record, nor finding him, I suppose."

"No; he has been dead several years."

"And was there no one else present beside Mr. Scott?"

"Oh yes; his sister Lucinda and Doct. Evans, and at least twenty colored people, beside my father and mother, but they are both dead."

"Yes, and the colored people might as well be, for any good they can do us. I must get this trial put off and send for Doct. Evans and wife; there is no help for us without them."

"Oh dear! Don't say the case is hopeless."

"No; never hopeless. But it has an ugly look. If it was anybody else but Mac, I should hope he might fail to prove the identity of Fortune as the son and heir of his father. Don't be alarmed if you hear me tell some as big lies this afternoon as you have already heard. My mind is made up to fight the devil with his own fire."

Mr. Williams then went to the tavern, held a short conference with the stranger, ate a very light dinner, and, as he said, "wound himself up ready for any emergency."

When the parties returned to the court-house, it was difficult to get through the crowd. The news had spread rapidly about the course Mac had taken, and the people had come by hundreds to witness the result—a result that those who were present in the morning feared would strip one of the best and wealthiest families in the county of every thing they possessed, except the sympathy of all their acquaintances.

The court was called promptly to the minute. The judge said to Mr. Williams: "You were about to make a motion; we will hear you now. Sheriff, you must enforce silence."

"May it please the court, I will do that. I am sure that this collection of people will listen to what I am about to say."

In a moment the house was so still that the silence was almost oppressive.

"I wish to make a motion, and I hope my opponent will grant me the courtesy I have often extended to him, not to oppose my motion. May it please the court, we are taken by surprise. This is an unheard of case. A brother who has all his life acknowledged his sister, comes into court and suddenly springs a trap upon us by denying the marriage of this girl's mother with his father—brands his sister as illegitimate, for the purpose of wresting the portion she owns of her father's estate. Not only her portion, but her all, upon which he has no just claim, because he has had and spent his share, and would now make a beggar and a bastard of his sister. Taken by surprise, we have no witnesses to prove this marriage."

"I knew you had n't," interrupted Mac; "there never were any."

"My learned friend is very much mistaken; there are three persons within the sheriff's call who witnessed this marriage, either of whom will be sufficient, if he will admit them to be sworn."

"Who are they?"

"My respected friend Daniel Scott, and Emily Scott, the lady the gentleman has branded to-day with most opprobrious names. Of course, he will not admit either of these. He answers by a learned shake of the head. Then we have another, an aged female, a member of the Methodist Church in good standing, whose intelligence is indisputable, whose integrity is undenied, whose veracity no man living dares to doubt; this is the nurse of Mrs. Scott, the good old Dinah."

"The devil! Do you mean to insult me by offering a nigger witness. I suppose you could bring a score of such cattle from Virginia!"

"Yes, sir, every one of whom was present and would testify to the truth. But there are other living witnesses, whose skin will pass muster with the gentleman, who can and shall be brought into court in due time, and I therefore ask your Honors to grant a continuance of this case until next term.

"The court cannot do so at this stage of the proceedings, without the consent of the plaintiff, which we presume he will give."

"Never," said Mac, "unless the gentleman will make his affidavit who the witnesses are and what he can prove by them, and that he has used all possible efforts to have them here at this term."

"The witnesses are Doct. Evans and wife, now residents of Lynchburg, Virginia, who were present at the marriage which was solemnized by the Reverend Mr. Ives, a Methodist minister of the Gospel. I cannot say that we have 'used all possible efforts to have them here this term,' because we did not anticipate that any man living was wicked enough to utter such words against such an estimable lady, as we have heard here to-day.

"I will now ask the opposing counsel to grant the postponement as a favor. I did a similar one for him only last week."

"The bigger fool you were, then. I won't agree to any continuance. The trial must go on.

"Sheriff, call the witnesses. We have fooled away time enough listening about a bad case. I advise the gentleman not to undertake hopeless cases in future, out of pure gallantry to innocent females."

There was another commotion in the audience after this insulting speech, but it was soon hushed, and Mac examined his witnesses and produced his records unmolested by his opponent.

At length he said: "We rest," and the court called upon Mr. Williams for his defense. Indiana sat with her head down, almost overwhelmed with the prospect of the close of the trial and a verdict against her. I had forgotten to state that she was included nominally in the suit, so as to make a final close of the whole matter, as well as to prevent her from being a witness.

The court now said to Mr. Williams; "Have you any witnesses," in a tone that seemed to indicate that it did not see what he could offer in defense. At least so thought the defendants and nearly all who heard the question.

Mr. Williams, however, seemed just then unusually elated. His eyes fairly glistened with delight as he answered: "I have. Call Luke Weston."

The crowd were startled by a sharp nervous scream from Indiana, who grasped Mr. Williams's arm and repeated in a low tone—"Luke Weston."

"Yes," he whispered, the man of my dream."

"Then I trust in Providence; we are saved."

"I trust so too."

As Indiana laid her hand upon Mr. Williams's arm, it brought the ring she wore in full view of the stranger, who up to this time had appeared perfectly imperturbable. He could remain so no longer. He was deeply excited and whispered to Mr. Williams: "There is the identical ring that I told you about. How came it here?"

"Don't be too certain. It may be a duplicate. We will inquire into that."

Mr. Williams then whispered to Indiana: "What ring is that?" She answered: "It was my mother's wedding-ring, a duplicate of one my father wore into that fatal battle."

"And which is found."

"Oh my God! Then we are not forsaken."

Mac had started to rise when he heard the strange name, but stopped a minute to try to catch a word of the whispering; all the time he was glaring about like a wild beast, ready to spring upon the man who should answer to a name he had never heard before. When he saw the stranger rise, whom he had been watching, he jumped to his feet and exclaimed:

"I object to this witness"

"State your objections, then," the court replied.

"First, then, if the court please, I object to going on under such circumstances as the defendant is engaged in. I want first to know what he is going to prove by this suspicious stranger, whom he has introduced mysteriously, to take us by surprise. I want, before he is allowed to be sworn, to know why his name caused that remarkable scream that we have heard but now ringing through the court room. Was that a part of the by-play the counsel proposes to act? Then I want to know what is the meaning of all this whispering about the ring that the lady is wearing to-day—for the first time in her life, I am told, is that, too, to affect the jury by some clap-trap? I propose to withdraw a juror, and continue this cause."

"We will first hear your objections to this witness. Perhaps they are sufficient to exclude his testimony. The court will not allow any clap-trap. It will hear you."

Elated to think the court was upon his side, Mac-Varden proceeded:

"If the court please then, I will first state the very remarkable circumstances under which the witness is introduced. I have, I think, learned the whole of them. He was brought to the tavern last night by the counsel for the defendant in his wagon after dark, and kept hid in his room, where they were talking until two o'clock at night, in relation to this case. I may say the witness was getting his instructions what he was to testify. He was brought into court this morning and kept close by his instructor until the court adjourned. Then he is sent to the counsel's room to wait till he has an interview with his clients. I saw and heard this movement myself. Now he is called by a name never heard of before in this county, and probably in no other, and upon that we are treated to a theatrical start and scream, from this very interesting actress, who has also been instructed how to play her part, so as to produce an effect upon the jury. Then follow whisperings, and then will follow, I fully believe, perjury. That is why I object, and shall continue to object; unless the counsel will state what he intends to prove by this ready-made witness."

"That, if the court will allow me, I am ready to state."

"The court will not advise, though we do not see any grounds for the plaintiff to object to this witness. Certainly the mere fact that he is a stranger, or that he came into town with the counsel for defendant, is not sufficient. As to the start of the young lady, we presume that may be accounted for upon the hypothesis of having recognized an old acquaintance, who is presumed to know something about her family affairs. We will hear you, Mr. Williams."

"Then, please your Honor, I will state that I will prove by this witness that the shipwreck in which the wife of Abel Atwater perished, took place in 1807, and not in 1811, as the counsel has alleged. I will prove that she was a young wife, with her first and only child, and *that both perished together*, and that this man is the only survivor of that wreck, and consequently the pretended claimant of the property of my clients is an impostor—an impossible heir. And the court will take notice that my opponent has not offered one iota of evidence to identify the plaintiff as the son and heir of Abel Atwater. This omission was not accidental. No lawyer would ever close his case with such a fatal loophole open. He dared not offer any proof upon this point. He trusted that it would not be discovered, or that it was taken for granted that Fortune Atwater was the son of Abel Atwater.

"I tell you, *he is no son*, who can take an estate by inheritance, because he was only adopted, being the illegitimate child of one of Abel's sisters. His claim would be good under the will, but never by the right of inheritance. But, leaving all that out of consideration, there is another point upon which the plaintiff has utterly failed to establish his right to recover. He sues as the heir of Abel Atwater, but he has not given you one word of evidence that said Abel is dead, and we contend, and are now ready to prove by this witness that he is not—that he is alive, and now residing as a sort of chief among the Pottowottomies of Indiana.

"The start and exclamation of Miss Atwater—if it please the gentleman better, I will say 'Miss Indiana Scott, with the addendum of Atwater'—is perfectly natural, since she has long known that Luke Weston was on board her father's vessel when it was wrecked and carried his wife and child down with it. But she supposed this gentleman was still following his profession far away upon the ocean. I do not wonder that my learned friend is also surprised, and springs to his feet with consternation written in deep lines all over his face, for he knows all these things, and he, too, supposed this gentleman so far away that no power could bring him here. But he forgot One Power, who watches over those who place their trust in it. The gentleman wants to know what all this whispering is about. I will tell him that too. 'This ring,' holding up Indiana's hand for the court to see, 'this is the wedding ring of this girl's mother. Its exact duplicate was worn by this girl's father—*is worn still*—this man has seen it within a month, and my learned friend opposite may see it within the next month. The legal and proper owner shall appear in *propria persona* before this court, or another, if my opponent compels me to appeal; or, what is more likely, shall appeal himself. But I will not drive him to that. I accept, may it please the Court, his application to continue the cause. A juror may be withdrawn and the jury discharged, and the case will then stand upon the record to be commenced *de novo*. And I wish the gentleman to bear this in mind, that this is his motion, which I do not oppose, as he did mine a few hours ago, when he thought he had my fingers in a trap. It is my trap now and his fingers. I do not wish to take them off at this time, because I intend to take his head with them at the next term, and make a finish of the job at once."

The crowd, which up to the present time had been entirely orderly, while swayed alternately by hope and fear, could not be restrained any longer, but broke out into a prolonged clapping of hands and feet. In vain the sheriff cried silence, and the court tried to look dignified. One man said afterward, "that he saw one of the judges stamping as hard as any of the boys." Perhaps he did, for the people were wild with enthusiasm. As soon as quiet could be restored, the judge made the necessary orders about the record, and then said: "Mr. Sheriff, adjourn court till to-morrow. It is useless to try to do business until these people get sober."

There was one man, however, "sober as a judge." The blatant Mac was crest-fallen enough. When he ate his dinner, he was confident of a verdict before supper. He had been promised an enormous fee if he would get judgment at this term. It would be of but little value, to plaintiff or attorney, a year hence, and Mac had carefully baited his trap to this end. His opponent had sprung it, and no one knew better than "the little villain," as he was often called, whose fingers were caught. The pain of defeat, and disgrace, and exposure of his trickery, were unbearable. Having long contemplated removal to Oregon, he hoped to obtain spoils enough out of this suit to give him a good start. He determined not to wait the extremely slight chance of a fee at the next term, but began packing his books for the journey before he slept that night, and a week later had started.

Scott and Indiana hurried away to carry the news to her mother, who had heard the commotion at the court, and was in a state bordering upon distraction, not knowing that everybody was in sympathy with her husband and child. She was not much relieved by the confused story they told of what Mr. Williams had said he could prove by Luke Weston. Could it be possible that the story was true about the ring and the wearer? Had Luke Weston seen her first husband alive! Then she was really living in adultery with Daniel Scott!

For a few minutes Mrs. Scott suffered the torment of hopes, doubts and fears. She was not relieved until the arrival of Mr. Williams and Mr. Weston, who followed Scott as soon as they could get clear of hand-shaking with those who crowded around in hearty congratulation.

Indiana saw the two approaching and met them at the door. Without waiting an introduction, she at once extended her hand—the hand with the ring, to give Luke a welcome to the house.

"Oh, Mr. Weston, I need no introduction to you. Your name has long been familiar as a household word. But I want to introduce you to my mother. My step-father you have seen in court, and he knows you, or at least your history, for it was he that told it to me."

"And," said Scott, "is now truly glad to see you, and we shall all be glad to welcome you at our own home, as though you were one of our oldest friends."

"And now, Mr. Williams, for pity's sake tell us, what on earth did you mean by that story about the ring, and that Mr. Weston had seen it upon the hand of Abel within a month?"

"I didn't say so. You only jumped at that conclusion; and so did Mac. I will tell you all about it; but first let me tell you that I have heard within five minutes that Mac swears he will throw up the case. He believes the devil is in conspiracy with me against him. You remember I told you that I would fight the devil with his own fire. By that I meant that I would outlie this outrageous liar. I think I did, professionally, you know. That is our business when necessity demands. Now about the ring. My friend here must tell you that story. Miss Indiana, will you draw that one from your finger and let him look at it. Is it the same, Mr. Weston?"

"In every respect except the letters inside. These are E. S., that was L. L."

"Why those were the initial letters of my brother's mother. I say brother, notwithstanding he was lost on the wreck, Mr. Williams."

"All right, 'Miss Indiana Scott, with the addendum of Atwater'—I can stand your bantering. But to business. Would you not like to hear Mr. Weston's story?"

"Yes, truly," said Mrs. Scott, "but our tea is now ready, and we all want you both to join us. I am sure, although we are not at home, that you will be most cordially welcomed, as our friends, by good Mrs. Mabel, who I wish should have the opportunity of hearing Mr. Weston's story. She has heard the first part of it. Come."

It is not at all remarkable that Weston and Indiana were mutually pleased with each other's appearance. He said to Williams, at the first opportunity: "Really she is an extremely fine looking, intelligent girl. A little given, I should think, to believe in spiritual influences, but still of a very pleasing manner. Do you say she is quite unengaged, matrimonially?"

"Quite so, I am sure."

In answer to some remark of Mrs. Mabel, Indiana acknowledged "that she really did think him the most pleasing man she had ever met, and quite handsome. His voice, too, was musically pleasant; but what was most interesting of all, was his truly Providential appearance here, at such a momentous time. It seems almost like a miracle. It is wonderful how he was directed here."

"My dear girl, did you think for a moment that he was directed here simply because 'matches are made in heaven;' for sure as heaven, one is now making out of this Providential meeting."

After tea, and after he had got warmed up in the cheerful atmosphere of this family, Weston told his story. I shall give the main points of it in his words:

"I have been a dozen years or more a resident of Indiana, partly farmer and partly merchant. My home is near the center of the east line of the State; or rather I had a home there, and a very comfortable, pleasant one, until my mother died; since which I have felt so lonely in it that I have become quite a wanderer, and do not know but I shall have to go back to sea, if some lady does not take compassion upon me and make that home smile again."

"Are you a bachelor?" asked Mrs. Scott.

"I am both sorry and glad that I am. Sorry on my own account; glad upon yours, if my presence here has been of any advantage to you in this most interesting case. If I had not been a bachelor, it is not at all likely that I should have been here now. I took the journey because I was lonely at home, and because I wanted to see my old friend, Capt. Bushnell, who has lately moved into the east part of this State."

"Why, father, we had quite lost sight of them. I think Althea will be a valuable witness for us about the Connecticut property that Fortune had of my father's estate."

"I doubt," said Williams, "whether you will ever want any witness, except it is to prove your father's handwriting, and for that your aunt will be very competent, probably. But we interrupt Mr. Weston."

"Oh, not at all. I have but little to tell, you know."

"A few weeks since, hearing of a large convocation of Indians upon the upper part of the Tippecanoe River, in Fulton County, I determined to go and have one sight of these strange people. I had seen a few of 'the last of the Mohicans,' in Connecticut, and read a good deal of them in Cooper's novels, but had never had an opportunity to see them in their primitive condition. I went and spent a week at or near the treaty ground, and I think I saw the animal in its native element. At least I saw them of all ages and sexes, naked and half naked; wild and half civilized; sober and half drunk; and generally half leg deep in mud, for it rained half of the time, and altogether it was a picture that I would cross the continent to see once. I do not think I should care to repeat the visit, and I am sure I never shall regret having made it, both on my own account and yours. It certainly gratified my curiosity, and gave me an insight of Indian character such as I never had anticipated. It was curious, and some things I learned there, which I related for the first time to Mr. Williams last evening, excited him so much that he exclaimed 'wonderful!' several times. He says the whole, from the inception of the idea of making that visit, up to the present time, is only working out proofs to those who rely upon Providence. Of that I shall leave you to judge.

"In one of my walks through the camp I observed a dignified old Indian, quite distinguishable from the mass, because he wore a hat. He was trying to light his pipe with a match, which, owing to the dampness, he could not effect. Almost without premeditation I took one from my pocket, lighted a fine Havana cigar, and handed him that with my best respects. The old fellow's face smiled all over. Next morning I met him again, and he saluted me with *bon jour, nic-on.* The French 'good morning,' I understood, and returned the salutation. The Indian word I afterward learned was 'my friend.' It was my initiation into Indian friendship. I gave him another cigar, and in return for this civility he took me to his wigwam and introduced me to his wife and grand-daughter. I also found there a half-breed French girl, with whom I could talk easily. She gave me her name, beautifully written; here it is, 'Miss Agnes Bailey, near Lake Michigan, below mouth of Trail Creek.'

"The old Indian's name was Shovalya. At some previous treaty he had made a reservation of 'two sections,' where he used to live on the bank of a lake somewhere in the north part of the State. Owing to some difficulty about locating the reserve, or else because somebody else had got possession, he now wanted to quit-claim to the Government, and have it pay him the value of the land in cash. I believe there was some hitch about the matter.

"I heard the Indian name of that lake, where this chieftain's extensive domain of two square miles is located, and as I did not know but I might return to marry an Indian princess, I wrote it down—here it is —'Mus-qua-och bis.' Miss Bailey told me it was 'the Lake of Red Cedars.' Her father had come to the treaty, partly as old Shovalya's attorney, and partly to get claims allowed for goods sold to the tribe, and he had brought his Detroit educated daugter to be his interpreter.

"Having little to do while waiting the slow process of an Indian talk with the officials about the few reservations still held, and which the Government wanted to buy, so as to remove all the Indians in a body, I found my new acquaintances rather interesting. I cannot say that we got along very rapidly in conversation. I could speak my native tongue in pretty good New-England English, and Spanish and Portuguese fluently; but my French was defective, or else that of the interpreter was sadly mixed with Pottowattomie, and that is a language that I will defy any jaw to be able to twist around with one week's trial.

"And now comes the only part of my story that has any interest for you. I observed upon the hand of the young squaw a curious, valuable gold ring.

"This ring naturally attracted my attention, more than one of any other pattern would have done, because it was a nautical emblem, quite out of place upon such a hand. I could not help observing the singular form of two hands clasped over a rope and anchor, and two hearts.

"I asked the squaw to let me examine it. I found it had been well preserved, for it was thirty years old. Evidently, I said to myself, the wedding ring of some victim slain by these wicked savages. But why had they kept it so long? Certainly not to wear. Then I offered to buy it, and began counting out silver dollars from one hand to the other. As the pile grew large the young squaw's eyes dilated, and she looked to her mother or her grandmother, and then to the old chief, and said: 'Shall I take it?'

"Cho-in," he answered, with a strong emphasis on the last syllable, which is a very emphatic "No." And he pulled off his hat and said: "Not if I would fill it over and over again."

"I was surprised. What can it mean? I said. Is it possible that there is so much integrity in an Indian, that he will thus preserve a relic, or perhaps token of friendship of some white man or woman? I could not rest until I learned the history of that ring. I will not undertake to give it in the style it was related by the old man. That would be impossible, after translating it from the figurative Pottowattomie into patois French, and from that into English; but this is the gist of it:

"At the battle of Tippecanoe my father, Sabaqua, and I took a prisoner. He wore that ring. He was a good man. He had lost a leg and could not run away. He lived long with us. We treated him as kindly as though he was a son or brother He talked much of his squaw. She was beautiful as the lake where we lived; as lithe and playful as a pet deer, and her voice as sweet as the song-birds. I wanted to send him back to her, but Sabaqua's wife had adopted him as her son, in place of the one killed in battle. Beside, the white men were at war with us. At length, when peace came, I hoped his squaw would come to seek him, but he could not wait for her. The Great Spirit wanted him. He sleeps among the cedars, where he can hear the waves murmuring upon the pebbly shore. He chose the spot himself, and put his mark upon a tree; this is it."

And with a stick he marked the rude forms of two letters, A. A., in the sand at his feet.

"If the white man will come to my wigwam at Mus-qua-och bis, I will show him where the *wy-o-net chemo-koman* sleeps. Before he went away to the spirit land he gave us this ring, and put into our hands his talk upon paper, which we are to give to his squaw whenever she comes with a ring like this upon her finger. His brother came, and he lives with us, Whitehead Wabeson; but he did not bring the ring, and we have not given him the talking paper. Ah, me! what shall we do if she does not come soon, for the Great Father at Washington says we must all go away beyond the Big River. Stranger! are you going toward the sunrise, for that is where the white squaw lives that wears the ring. If you see her, tell her to come soon. That paper is worth more to her than this hat a hundred times full of dollars. Does my brother think now that old Shovalya would sell that ring. Never, never, never!"

"By Heavens!" exclaimed Scott, "it is the will, and it must be found. Indiana, it is your mission, and this is the work of Providence. Let us thank God and take courage."

"I thought the same," said Mr. Williams, "but did not say so. I thought it better to tell Mac that we would produce the man who made the will. That, however, must be discovered, if you have to search every Indian wigwam in the State. And I think that it will fall to the lot of Miss Indiana Scott, 'with the addendum,' to perform the mission of the beautiful squaw, from near sunrise, who is to come to the Indians with the ring that will serve as a key to their confidence. It strikes me, from what Mr. Weston told me last night and what he has now told you, there will be no difficulty in finding the locality. I have already fixed upon it in my own mind as not far from the treaty ground, for there are several lakes near there, marked on the map. I do not think such an old Indian would travel far with his family. And Miss Bailey said he did not live near her father, who I take it, could be easily found. Then this Wabeson is an Indian trader, and he must be well known. It is a little singular, though, that the Indians speak of him as Abel's brother. There is some mistake there. Now, while I think of it, I will tell you what I will do. I will write to the Indian Bureau at Washington for full information about this Shovalya reservation—where it is located, &c., and may get an answer by the time Mr. Weston returns, and then I think you must try to enlist him to go with you. I am confident, Miss India, you will return in a month with your father's will in your pocket, feeling gloriously to think that you have recovered it with your own hands from its long sleep, as you above all others are to be most benefited.

"Now, my friend, we will retire to our lodgings, and I will guarantee that you can get twenty men if you want them to-morrow, to repair your wagon, which, thanks to its maker, broke down at a very opportune moment.

"Good night. I shall be busy in court, but Mr. Weston will be at leisure to talk with you to-morrow."

"We shall hope to see him early—certainly at dinner. Good night."

After the gentlemen had retired, Indiana said to her mother: "I suppose it is a foolish, romantic notion that I have indulged for years—indeed ever since father read to me in Capt. Bushnell's letters the history of Luke Weston—yet I have indulged it and cannot divest my mind of the idea that I shall yet be that man's wife. Since I have seen him and experienced all that has occurred this day, I am free to acknowledge that I could love him in reality as well as I have in my dreamy fancies. And unless you object, if our acquaintance should induce confidence, and a desire on his part to continue it upon more intimate relations, I shall not object. Do you?"

"My dear," said Mrs. Scott, "you had better wait until you are asked, before you accept or refuse. I certainly like the appearance of the man, and if his story proves true, we shall owe him a debt of gratitude that will be difficult for us all to pay."

Indiana was right in her suspicions. Weston came early, and had a long talk with the family before dinner. When that was over he addressed himself, he said, equally to Indiana and her parents.

"You know, it seems, something of my history. I want you to know more of me, and of my character and standing at my home. And when you are satisfied upon that point, I wish to know if I may then put a question to Indiana, which will regulate my future, and perhaps affect her happiness and mine. I am getting into that period of life that I must, if I intend ever to do so, think soon of marriage. While my mother lived I would not take a wife. Now I need one. I have never before met a lady that I felt I could solicit to be mine with such satisfaction as this one; and I do most respectfully ask that you will take this proposition into serious consideration, and give me an answer on my return from my visit to Capt. Bushnell. In the mean time you will hear from Washington, and then, whether the answer that I hope for is favorable or not, I will do all in my power to aid you in your great undertaking."

## CHAPTER XXX.

"So fades the red man away."
"Your story and your hospitality have added ten years to my life."

It was probably two months later than the court and courting scenes of the last chapter that old Shobonier came to my house one day to have a talk. His countenance betrayed sadness. I thought it was because Government had refused to give him the money for his reservation. Owing to the uncertainty of location, "at his village," which had no fixed point, the Commissioners would not buy because it would not be salable, and as the old man could not live upon it, or rather could not get his living out of it, and had but a little while to live, he wanted the money now, if ever. As the weather was growing cold, I feared that he felt the want of more clothing, and was sad to think he was so poor he could not procure it.

Acting upon this idea, I went into the store and brought out an excellent large, fine wool-blanket, worth twelve or fifteen dollars, and offered it to him, to be paid for out of the winter's hunt. He was very grateful, though at first he refused to take it, but afterward consented. He was afraid he might not live to gather the skins for payment.

I may as well remark here, to his credit, that he punctually paid the debt.

It was neither of these causes that made him sad. What then? He told me that he had only yesterday heard from Maj. Owens, who was giving notice to all the Indians to be ready to leave early in the Spring for their new homes beyond the Mississippi, and he was now going away on his Winter hunt and might never return again. I thought this more than likely, for the end of his years drew nigh. Old Sabaqua and his wife had gone, bequeathing him a solemn trust, which he feared he should not be able to fulfill. This was the cloud that obscured his face. It was not because he was going away to the far off hunting ground; not because he was old and poor, and near his end. Personally he had no fear. Still he was sad.

At length he asked to see once more the relics from Me-won-i-toc's grave. He gazed long at the portrait, and then asked me: "Do you still think that he will come to look at the grave of the White Swan?"

Who can tell what prompts our thoughts, words or actions, which are often as much beyond our control, when awake, as they are when asleep.

This idea is aptly illustrated by the boy's excuse for whistling in school.

"Please, sir, I did not whistle—it whistled itself."

In my reply to Shobonier's question, whether "it" spoke itself or not, I cannot say; but I know the words came instantly to my lips without premeditation.

Something seemed to whisper in my ear, "say yes," and I answered, confidently, "Before you go away to the far off hunting ground, he will be here."

The old man's face brightened, and I felt glad, although my faith was none of the strongest that what I had said was truth. Then he asked me if I had yet heard any answer to the talks I had sent away? "Would the white squaw come to look at the lone grave and take away the talking papers?"

I answered again, under the same involuntary impulse:

"Yes. She has already left the place where the sun rises. They will come upon the same trail over which you brought the White Swan. His dog has scented her step. He will follow it. He already smells blood. He is coming to mourn. His teeth are gone. He will not bite. She will bring presents to her red friends, who have kept the white flag waving among the cedars. You shall see them both. When the snow flies they will come."

As soon as the words were uttered, I wondered why I spoke them, since I had no reason for believing in their fulfillment.

I had received no satisfactory answers to "the talks" which I had published in sketches intended to attract the attention of those who had lost friends in the Indian wars. Not one letter received had identified any of my characters.

Yet, from some impulse, I answered Shobonier's question in a way that gave him great satisfaction.

I was as glad as he, yet I had less faith in the fulfillment of my own words.

Until the death of Sabaqua and his wife, Shobonier had never had any responsibility about the secret of the lone grave. Whatever it was, I could see that it was burdensome to him. I had seen the ring, which was most carefully kept, but I had never before heard of any "talking papers." I would have asked, but I have made it a point through life never to seek another man's secret. It was enough for me to take care of my own. The old man went away with an implicit, childlike faith that he should be able to deliver up his trust in due time.

Although he made no inquiries, nor did he appear to notice certain indications about the house, he probably "read sign," as Mike Haskins would say, for the next morning when I awoke, I heard a great jabbering outside, and as I looked out, I saw the yard full of squaws, from old grandmother Shobonier down through the several generations and side branches. I was, for once, astonished, and if the company had been male instead of female, I should have been alarmed. I should have thought they had come to demand redress for a fancied injury. I was not conscious of anything I had done to offend the female portion of the family, though I had, only three nights previous, done something to one of the men that I regretted, and for which I did not know but he might feel some resentment, when he was drinking. This was it.

A drunken Indian came to the door just at dusk of a very cold night and wanted to sleep by the fire. This I peremptorily refused. Giving a fire-brand, I bade him go to the bush. Then he stopped to tell me that "Old Spot," a real drunken dog, and vicious when drunk, had fallen on the prairie and broken his leg, and wanted we should go out with a sled and haul him in. This I sharply refused to do, and told the fellow it would be a good riddance of both of them if they froze to death that night.

Yet I was not quite so hard-hearted as I wished the Indian to believe I was; for after he was gone, I went with one of my young men a couple of miles out on the prairie and called loudly, On-ton-e-mock-e-taw, the name of "Old Spot," but we got no answer. Yet we were probably within a few rods of where he lay all night in a drunken stupor on the frozen ground, not because his leg was broken, but because his ten gallon keg of whisky was too heavy for him, and both went down together, equally insensible. That was why the other had tried, by telling a lie, to get me to go out and haul both man and load in together. It is a wonder that he did not perish.

About daylight we were startled by some one fumbling at the door, which being unfastened, directly opened, and let in Old Spot, crying "bish, bish, bish." Water, water, water. He was perishing with thirst, and drank cupful after cupful. His limbs were not frozen but dreadfully benumbed, and the pain of thawing out must have been terrible, judging from his actions. At length my wife got up and made him a strong cup of coffee, and gave him some food, and he started back again upon the prairie. An hour or two after we saw him going by, so as to avoid coming near the house, with his great enemy strapped over his shoulders. Great enemy truly, for it was in the drunken muss that came of that keg, that he got his death-blow from the knife of his relative, Ne-o-mock-e-taw.

But to return to my lady visitors, and their visit, for it demonstrates that there is a good spot in the Indian heart, if we know where to find it.

Their camp was seven miles distant, and a snow had fallen during the night, six or eight inches deep, and the weather turned warm, so that the walking was what a white woman would have termed "awful," and quite enough to deter her from going out to pay a visit of ceremony; a respect only shown by these rude people to some particular friend upon an extraordinary occasion.

Now what was the occasion, and how did these squaws know when to pay it? They had probably been observant; so had Shobonier, and he had told them that an accouchement was probably about to occur in the wigwam of their friend Wabeson. As the mistress had always treated them kindly, and with respect, they had come all these long miles, through the wet snow, to pay her a highly complimentary visit.

I dressed hastily, raked open a bed of hickory coals on the kitchen hearth, and then went out to invite in my visitors to the comforts of the fire, and set myself about looking up something to give them to eat. The old squaw watched my motions, and soon gave me to understand they had not come to take breakfast with me—they had come to see the baby—"the new pappoose." I offered to go and bring it out. No, they wanted also to see its mother. I went and told her the singular request, and she said, "Oh, yes, poor creatures, let them come."

As they crossed the hall between the two log-cabins, the leader, who had her company under good subordination, stopped and made every one pull off her wet mocasins. Then they filed in past the bed, with a pleasant "bonjour, nic-on," and seated themselves in a circle upon the floor. Then the old squaw asked for the pappoose, and I handed it into her arms. She took it with the inquiry if it was a boy, holding it a minute, while she pronounced a few words in a low tone, to which her companions responded. Then it was passed to each in her turn, with a repetition of the words and responses, until it came around the circle and was returned to its mother. Then the *seance* broke up and the actors passed out, with another "bonjour," and away back to their homes.

What influence this "circle" and the blessings of these Indian mothers had upon the "spiritual development" of the "pappoose," I cannot say. I only know that he grew to manhood a noble boy, and continued until his young life ended, one of the gentlest, kindest, sweetest dispositioned sons that a father was ever blessed with.

These early morning ceremonies of the mystic circle, or some other "spiritual influences," seemed to surround me.

I had told old Shobonier that the lover of the White Swan was coming to look where she slept. That the wife of him who wore the curious ring was flying hither with its duplicate on her hand, to claim "the talking papers," which the Indians were so anxious to surrender.

How little I thought when I made this statement that she had already left the regions of "sunrise," that she was then approaching so near to "sundown." These are the figurative terms by which Indians denote unknown distances to the East and West.

It was on the very night of the day the squaws came to pay that ceremonious visit, which I have always felt did those whom they visited much honor; that the same Indian who lied about Old Spot, came to the house after dark and told us there were white folks in trouble on the prairie. They had, so he said, undertaken to cross the same stream in which Fowler stuck, on his return from mill, and had broken through the ice; which I could believe possible, though I doubted the rascal's story, particularly as he wanted to be rewarded for his information with a drink of "goodnatos," (whisky) and failing that, he would take a piece of "quaskin" (bread). But he got neither, because he was drunk. That was the rule; never to feed a drunken Indian. If one wanted favors, he must come sober.

We all thought afterward that the rule should have been relaxed a little in this case, and his information better rewarded. It would have been, if it had been believed. It was not, because we knew the fellow was a liar.

He said there was "an old man and a young squaw." Then he changed front, and made it out a young man and an old squaw. Finally, we did not believe any part of the story, and drove the miserable, drunken liar away.

I regretted having done so before he had been gone a half hour, for there began falling rapidly a sharp, fine, icy snow. The wet snow of the morning was already solid. The night was likely to be a dismal one.

These sudden changes are common near Lake Michigan. The day had been delightful, but who could withstand the night? It was tedious to go outside of the shelter of the grove where I went to listen. I began to be alarmed lest the Indian's story had been treated too lightly.

Out on the prairie I felt the force of the fine, drifting snow, each grain cutting as it touched the skin, like the prick of a needle. I hurried back to the house and told the hired man to harness the horses as quickly as possible and drive out as far as the river, and see whether the Indian had told the truth, and if he had not, I would give him leave to hang him the first time he caught him sober. I knew that this would not put the fellow in any immediate danger of his life.

The more I moved in the matter, the more the thought grew upon me that some of our fellow-creatures stood in need of our assistance. At first, I intended to go with the wagon myself, but a grandson of old Shobonier at this moment happened to come along, and he volunteered to go with Russell, and I undertook to keep up a beacon light. I was sure that by the time they were ready to return, no one could possibly see where to go, facing the storm. It was going to be a wild night, such as no one can appreciate who has never experienced one of the same sort upon a broad, trackless prairie. Indeed, it is not easy for one to imagine the difficulty of night travel when there is no storm; much more when there was a blinding snow. I have often been out when my only guide was the wind, or my knowledge of the country enough to know which way the streams should generally tend. But these are blind guides for strangers. Steering for a grove in the distance, or rather for a particular point of it is not as easy as you may suppose, even in the day-time, for the appearance of the outline is constantly shifting as you approach. It is still more difficult to hit any particular point in the night. You can then fancy the condition of any travelers upon the night in question.

Out upon this trackless prairie, in this night of storm and darkness, there were travelers. The Indian had not lied, though he had not spoken all the truth. There was a wagon, and it had broken through the ice, But as there was one strong-armed man with an excellent pair of horses, he had, after great toil, succeeded in extricating the vehicle from the situation it was reported to be in by the Indian. and had crossed the river half a mile lower down. In doing so he had lost sight of the dim road they had been following. This was occasioned in this way The road, instead of striking out square from the ford where the first attempt was made to cross, turned directly up stream, so that the course the travelers took at the lower crossing in the expectation of getting back to the path, led them right out upon the prairie, and would naturally take them to a grove six miles from the one they were steering for. In this situation, night and the storm overtook them.

What should they do now? What could they do? The prospect was a terrible one. The party consisted of a man who had already passed the "three-score-and-ten" limit, and another who might be taken any where from thirty-five to forty-five, he was so robust and fine looking. The "young squaw" was a girl whose age would be guessed all along from eighteen to twenty-five.

The younger man stopped the team when it became quite dark, and got out, and walked and felt all around to try to find the road. The old gentleman had labored so hard to extricate the wagon that he had exhausted his strength, got into a perspiration, and was now suffering severely from the reaction. Beside, he was worn down with the fatigue of a month of hard traveling and constant disappointment in not finding the object of their pursuit.

It is hardly necessary to break in upon the narrative to tell the reader who this party was. It has probably already been guessed that it was the one that was to start from south-eastern Ohio in pursuit of the lost will.

Daniel Scott, Indiana, and Luke Weston, are themselves lost upon the prairie, only a few miles from the grave of her father.

Indiana endeavored to wrap him up and make her father more comfortable and to speak cheerful words, for which he thanked her, but said frankly that he was quite discouraged—they had for weeks been following an *ignis fatuus*, which had finally led them into the last ditch, where they must perish. At this moment, their companion returned and reported his unsuccessful search for the path.

"Then," says Scott, "we must spend a dismal night where we are as best we may. I hope we shall all live to see daylight, but I have not much faith."

"Oh, father, do not despond; I beg you, still trust in Providence. Hark! What is that? Again—It is the sound of a gun. There's another. What can it mean?"

"Probably some other poor soul in the same trouble that we are."

"No; it is a signal for us, I am satisfied. Probably that Indian has alarmed the settlement on our account. Yes, now I am sure of it; there is a signal light! Let us drive toward it at once. Stop; did you hear anything? It sounds like a wagon. It has stopped now. There—some one shouts. Let us all answer as one voice."

The shout was given, heartily no doubt; was heard by the quick ear of young Shobonier, and answered.

Did ever Indian yell sound sweeter in white ears? By it they knew they were saved. Saved too by another Indian, despised and drunken though he was. Yet it was his information that induced me to send out the wagon into that wild storm. It was that which lighted the signal fire upon the same spot it had been lighted often for benighted travelers whose approach across the wide prairie had been noticed as night was setting in.

To attract attention to the light these guns were fired, one, two, three, in rapid succession.

The gun used upon this occasion to give the three signals had a historical interest. It was a heavy "Queen Anne," found in old Me-won-i-toc's cabin. The barrel had undergone some preparation that wholly resisted decay, while the stock broke like a pipe stem, and the lock was worthless.

What art of preserving iron from rusting perished with "the Great Medicine?"

In going out to meet the travelers, my messengers, driving away from the wind, had not been able to follow the trail more than half way, when, in crossing one of the little sloughs that frequently occur on the prairie, they too, missed the path, and it was then that they stopped and gave the whoop that reassured those in the other wagon, who had almost given up, in despair of rescue from their peril.

I have mentioned this circumstance more particularly than was otherwise necessary, to show the dangers of frontier life. I might relate several cases where persons have perished within sight of hospitable firesides.

In an hour after this party were in such peril that the oldest had given up hope, they were seated around a glowing hickory-wood fire, talking of their adventures and awaiting the preparation of supper. I soon discovered that the young man and woman were none the worse for their journey. The old man was so much benumbed that he could not get out of the wagon without help; but fire and pepper tea soon restored circulation, and with that came cheerfulness, which brought happiness and more cheerfulness to his daughter, who seemed devoted to him to a degree that indicated a heart full of pure affection. It was something delightful to witness. During their conversation I caught a few words that made my own heart buoyant with hope. Hope that a mystery would soon be solved—that old Shobonier would be relieved of a trust that had become a burden—and that I should find a key that would unlock many of the incidents that I have already made familiar to the reader. But I was not quite sure of my company, and determined that I would not ask, so I waited and watched.

"Now, my dear," said the elder of the two gentlemen. "I think we have made our last effort. If we do not find this mysterious lake to-morrow we will set our faces homeward. I think this will make the hundredth that wev'e found and examined with a scrutiny that has often, I dare say, led observers to think us a set of crazy people. I do not know how many smoky Indian wigwams you have penetrated in search of something that always was somewhere else. Our view of the promised land has ever been a dissolving one, until I have not one iota of faith left. I do not believe any such Indian ever existed, or ever had a reservation, or that there is any such lake, or any such person as your French half-breed told you of in this part of Indiana. The probability is, that she was a girl of a remarkably lively imagination, and found Luke a good listener, upon whom she has exercised her talent at romancing. She certainly made a plausible story."

"But, father, you do not certainly doubt Mr. Weston's word."

"Ah!," I said to myself, "then he is not her brother. Perhaps husband. I shall see."

"Oh, certainly not; but as it was a matter that did not particularly interest him at the time, he might have been mistaken, even if not purposely deceived. The letter from Washington, you know, did not confirm the story about the Indian's reservation. There was no such name in the treaty. And as for the name of your Frenchman, we have searched the shore of Lake Michigan from the mouth of St. Jo. to Trail Creek, and not a person ever heard of such a man."

"What was the name?" I ventured to inquire. "I am pretty well acquainted along the lake shore."

"Are you?" said the young man. "Then, perhaps you can tell us if there ever was a Frenchman who lived anywhere near Trail Creek by the name of Bailey. Here it is in the handwriting of his daughter."

I took the paper, read it, and smiled as I handed it back to him, answering:

"When you look for Frenchmen, you must inquire for them in French. This name is not Ba-ly. It is written Bailey, and it is pronounced By-e. I know the writer of this name and her father. She has made a slight mistake. Her residence is not below, but above the mouth of Trail Creek. The place is easily found."

"Oh father! Let us still trust in Providence. Mr. Weston will you show the gentleman that letter; possibly he can unravel that mystery also."

The letter read:

> "There is no such reservation as you speak of, nor indeed any in the treaty with the Pottowottomies of Indiana, that bears any analogy to it. In the treaty with the 'Prairie Band of the Pottowottomies,' for lands confined to the State of Illinois, there is a reservation of two sections, 'at his village,' to one Chevalier, but none to any Indian by the name of Sho-val-ya. Respectfully, &c."

Being naturally given to mirth, I could not, or at least, did not restrain myself. I think the strangers were a little shocked at my levity, but as supper was just then announced, I put off any explanation. I thought I would astonish them upon a full stomach.

I was now certain of my company, for the young lady, who until now had worn her gloves, in pulling them off, disclosed to my anxious eyes that long hoped for testimonial ring. I had to exert myself to keep calm.

I had just finished the explanation, after supper, that "Chevalier," spoken in Indian is "Sho-val-ya." As I spoke the name some one came into the hall, and in answer to what he heard me say, made this reply: "No it ain't *Sho-val-ya*. He isn't so big a fool as I am to be out in sich a night as this. Why, 'twould freeze over a mighty hot place. I thought I was a gone coon this time, sure."

It was Mike Haskins, talking partly to himself and partly to me, as he brushed off the snow before entering. My heart was in my throat at the thought whether he would recognize this old gray-headed man as the story-teller of the camps of the Wabash, a quarter of a century ago. I had heard Mike say that he never forgot a face in all his life; that faculty was to be tested now. I welcomed him in, although I could see that the young lady rather shrunk from such a rough specimen of humanity.

As soon as he had "shook himself out," as he termed it, I told him to sit by the table and take some hot coffee to warm himself, although he protested he was not cold.

He took a seat, where he looked the old man full in the face, who had drawn back, and asked the privilege of smoking. I stood where I could watch Mike's countenance while I amused him with a little talk. I very soon saw that something beside listening to me was working in his mind. He could not eat. At length he broke out:

"Yes! By Heavens, it is. I never did miss it. I'm sure of that coon."

He got up and walked right over to the old gentleman—the daughter shrunk back; putting out his hand, he said: "if I am alive, and ain't dreaming nor drunk, you are Daniel Scott."

The frightened young lady fled to the side of Weston. Scott took Mike's proffered hand, and looked earnestly in his face a minute and then said: "Good God! are you Mike Haskins? or am I dreaming? Who are you all? Where am I? And is my toilsome journey ended? I begin to hope."

"Oh father! father! Tell me what does it mean?"

"Yes, yes, by and by, darling."

"And what do you think this means?" I said to Mike, as I took hold of the young lady's hand and showed him the ring.

"Think," said Mike, "I think it will unlock the mystery of that lone grave. I have this night come from old Shobonier's wigwam, where I have seen the counterpart of this ring and heard the whole story; and he wants you to visit him early in the morning and bring an augur to bore out a plug in the rocks, where those papers are hid. He is going to put them into your hands; he can't keep them any longer. He is going off North day after to-morrow, and says that he may never come back, and he must leave them in a safer place before he goes. 'Tell Wabeson,' said the old man, 'he must come.'"

"Wabeson!" the young lady repeated almost frantically as she grasped my arm, "are you the Indian trader Wabeson that we inquired for in vain these three weeks; surely, that is not your name?"

"Yes, in Pottowottomie, that is my name. If you had inquired of any Indian between the Tippecanoe and Chicago for 'Whitehead Wabeson,' he would have directed you here. Your trouble has been that you did not understand Indian."

"Once more. This man speaks of Shobonier as though he was identical with Chevalier. How is that?"

"Simply because he has two names. Perhaps you have, or have had. Is it Miss Scott, or Mrs. Weston; I am still in the dark."

"Yes, you are," she answered, laughing heartily; "for it is neither. My name is Atwater, Indiana Scott Atwater, daughter of Abel Atwater, who was lost at the battle of Tippecanoe. And from what I have now heard from this man and yourself, I hope, and I think not without reason, that I shall soon hear how he was lost, and I hope find some relics to assure us all that we have not searched in vain. And if we are successful, perhaps when we next meet you may call me by another name. I call this man father, because he has always been one to me, and because he is the husband of my mother." Turning to the other, she said: "To this one, if our journey terminates as I now hope it will, I shall owe everything, for it was through him that it was undertaken. I shall owe Mr. Weston such a debt of gratitude, that I shall only be able to pay it in one way."

"From appearances, I should judge that he will accept what is offered in payment with great satisfaction."

"You are right, sir, and feel that I am the debtor to a very large amount."

"You are a flatterer, Luke, and you know I have often told you how I hate such a creature. But I won't quarrel with you to-night, for I have a great many questions to ask our friends here, about this old Chevalier and his family, and what they know of the history of my father. I hope there is no mistake in this information, for I should sink in deeper despondency than father Scott if we should fail now. But I am glad that is all over. I have not seen him look so cheerful before since we have been in the State."

"I never had as much reason to be so. But don't you think, my dear, that it is about time that you were in bed? It is nearly midnight."

"Oh, no, sir; I could not sleep; but I think we ought to retire, for the lady of the house is sick, or rather is confined to her bed, and I fear we disturb her."

"I think not." I replied. "I have just consulted her, and she is not at all disturbed; her room is so far away from this. Beside, she is delighted at what I have told her about my guests, and wants me to show them some relics from an Indian burying-ground. Are your nerves all pretty strong, as there is a terrible murder connected with them. I would put it off till to-morrow, but that will be a busy day, as old Shobonier's camp is several miles away and the road very rough. How is the storm?"

This question I addressed to Mike, who had been out for an observation.

"All over, and the stars out. It will be a bright day to-morrow, and not half as cold as it was a few hours since."

"That will be favorable. I want to engage you, Mike, to pilot these people to old Shobonier's wigwam after breakfast, as I intend to go ahead and prepare the way. I will give you instructions, so that we can produce a little dramatic scene. You know how much effect it has upon these simple-minded people. I want to convince them that they are not deceived in the proper persons, and let them have the satisfaction of giving up the papers to the real owner. It will be a long-life joy and theme for a thousand and one nights of Indian stories. Now about the relics. Shall we have them to-night? Are you not too much fatigued?" I said to Scott.

"No, indeed. I never felt less so in my life. Your hospitality and information have added ten years to my life."

"Very well; then I will add ten more. Here is a knife, taken from a grave, that has a sad history. You may imagine this red color to be blood. It is that of a father and daughter—the latter very lovely and almost as white as the snow. Indeed, she was called the White Swan. I never heard any other name for her, and her father was only known to those who told me the story, by his Indian name of Me-won-i-toc. I know nothing where he came from, nor what the cause of his bitter hatred to his own race, but it was more cruel than the Indian's. He was a grand conjurer and had great power over the red men, to perpetuate which he doomed that beautiful girl, who had been stolen from her home, to a terrible death by fire. A noble young Indian, by the name of Meltonewah, had sworn that he would save and restore her to her friends; and to do this, he claimed her as his bride, which, according to Indian law, overrides all other claims and rescues the victims from the very jaws of death. Your father, Miss Atwater, was saved by adoption as the son of this old Shobonier's wife's mother. And this victim of Me-won-i-toc's hatred would have been saved by the same law, but the old villain abrogated it, and had Meltonewah confined and himself tied the victim to the stake, and in doing so, discovered by a mark upon her body that it was his own child, and was then as anxious to save as he had been to destroy her. It was too late. At that moment, the Indian made furious by the wrong inflicted upon him by this wretch, Me-won-i-toc, escaped from his confinement and leaped into the circle of flame with this knife in his hand, and plunged it into the old man with such force that it passed through his body and struck the heart of the girl he had come to save. He then took her in his arms and escaped the fire, leaving the father as the victim of his own infernal orgies. This is the story in brief; when I have more time I will tell it to you in full. You will then like this Meltonewah, notwithstanding he was the murderer, by his account, of one of the most beautiful girls that ever lived, and more amiable than beautiful. She had told him that she was betrothed to one of the best and hansomest young men in the world—perhaps he is dead, now, and never will hear how she died with his name on her lips—for it was a long time ago, half a century at least. Meltonewah had her carefully buried, with all she had brought with her. Here are some pieces of money that were in her pocket. Here is a lock of her hair. This was her finger ring, and this, which she wore upon her heart, was the likeness of her lover."

"Great God! It was Melligo. This is the ring I gave her—"

"Oh, yes, father, for this is your likeness, painted by Fortune's grandfather. Why, there is not money enough in the world to pay our dear, dear friend for this relic, which I know he intends to restore to you. May Heaven forgive us that we should despair when so near its gates. Oh, sir, I could almost worship you for guiding us so near to the goal that we have prayed for so many long years. Dear, dear father, I am beside myself with joy."

And she threw herself into his arms, and they embraced each other and kissed and wept, and thanked Heaven alternately. And each clasped my hands and poured out such a flow of words of gratitude that I was almost overwhelmed. The manly tears rolled down the cheeks of Weston, and Mike, rough as he was, wept like a child to witness the joy of these happy people.

When at length the company began to grow calm again, Mr. Scott said to me: "With your permission I will ask all present to join with me in a humble offering to that overruling Providence who has guided us safely to this post."

I gave my assent heartily and all kneeled down, and there was probably never uttered a more sincere thanksgiving. The words were most admirably fitted to the occasion, and their effect was wonderful. A few minutes before every face was flushed with excitement and every mind agitated. Now, all rose up together filled with joy, hope, thanks, love and calmness, ready to shake hands, say good-night, and lie down and sleep. No physician's soothing draught ever had a more quieting effect upon a nervous patient than this act of devotion had upon these nervously excited people. Something had the effect of making us all sleep later than I had intended, and I was at last aroused by an early visitor.

Old Shobonier had become as nervous in his wigwam as any of the inmates of mine. The storm had come on so suddenly and severely that he feared Mike would not get through to deliver the message sent to me; and beside, he had forgotten whether he sent for an augur, and had therefore started one of the boys as soon as he could see. It was his knock that awoke me in the midst of a dream, wonderfully confused with Indians and white folks, funerals and weddings, joy and despair. I looked up and saw the sun shining brightly, and found that my guests had all slept soundly as myself, but were now equally ready to move, being anxious to see the end of a journey that had caused them so much grief, despair, hope, labor, and fatigue.

I found the augur, and gave it to the boy with his expected ration of bread, and started him back to the wigwam to tell Shobonier to meet me, as soon as possible, at the grave among the cedars.

I knew the spot where he wanted to use the augur must be near that place, as there were no rocks at any other point. Then I gave Russell a memorandum of what I wanted him to do at the county seat, as soon as he could ride there, and also some further directions to Mike about the time to arrive at Shobonier's wigwam, and to watch for my signal.

Swallowing a hasty breakfast without waiting for the others, I mounted my horse and rode away.

As I approached the head of the lake, I had fallen into such a reverie that I should have passed on if I had not been startled by a—"Bonjour, nic-on," within six feet of my ear. When aroused, I was surprised to see Shobonier standing almost in the path. Returning the salute, making some excuse for not seeing him, and hastily dismounting, I followed him—two Indians never walk side by side—down to the lake and along the shore, until we came to a cedar of most remarkably jagged appearance, having one long crooked root coiled about and among a pile of bowlders, without any apparent connection with earth.

Here he stopped, straightened his bent form, pointed at the old cedar with his wrinkled, bony hand and finger, for a minute before he spoke.

"It is dead. It has been for generations the emblem of my family. Like that we have clung to life; we had like that small hold upon the earth. It has long been a superstition with us that our race would end with that tree. Mine will. I discovered yesterday that it was dead. Then I sent for you. There was a great trust hidden under the shade of this tree. Its leaves are gone. I must yield the trust before I go. There will be no more shade. The old trunk and branches may stand a little while. Not long, for the sap is all gone. I shall soon follow. See, this hand is withered. The sap is nearly dry. I am going North to-morrow. I shall never return. My father sleeps up there. I will sleep with him. My people must all go away as soon as the snow is gone. I don't want to go to the new hunting ground. I am too old."

We got down upon the ice, which, owing to the cold of the preceding night, was strong enough to bear us; though from the situation of this particular spot under the cedars, this was seldom the case, and Shobonier said would thaw out now before noon. We could not reach the spot he wanted to find, except on the ice. At length he stopped and began to examine the rock carefully, striking the face with his hatchet. Finally he said: "Bore here."

Bore, I thought to myself; what, into the solid rock? I stood with the augur in my hand, looking at him for an explanation. It was a quiet little joke of the Indian.

"White man not see him. Good hide." And he laughed gleefully. Then, with the edge of his hatchet, he began hewing off the face of the rock, as I thought. Rubbing his finger over the edge of the hatchet, he looked at me inquiringly—"Good stuff?" "Yes, I replied, work away. If you spoil it, I will give you another," as I had that one. I was now anxious, for I saw that he had cut away a mere scale of sand which had been mixed with pitch and plastered over a red cedar plug, about four inches in diameter, which was now disclosed. It was a most ingenious Indian *cache*. I very soon bored the plug out, and found a cavity beyond, more than a foot deep. In this *cache* I found a horseman's pistol, the breech of the stock shot away; a belt knife, two pocket-knives and a comb; a few coins; several keys; an old-fashioned, large silver watch. Evidently all the contents of a white man's pockets. As I took them out, one by one, and handed them to Shobonier, he gave a peculiar grunt of satisfaction, as much as to say "they are all right."

Then I opened a bundle carefully done up in smoke-dressed buckskin, and found a plethoric pocket-book—one of the old style russet leather. This, at the request of Shobonier, I opened on the spot and looked over the contents. There were bills of "The Bank of Virginia" to the amount of nearly one hundred dollars, and a variety of small papers and letters in the different compartments, but what was of the most importance, were the three following carefully written, folded, and indorsed papers:

"The last will of Abel Atwater, made November 7, 1811, on the battle-field of Tippecanoe."

"Marriage certificate of the Rev. D. W. Ives, January 1, 1811, Abel Atwater and Emily Strawn, Great Kanawha, Va."

"Diary kept by Abel Atwater from January 1, 1811, till ——"

I glanced at some of the last pages and saw that the blank should be filled with—"near death, among the Indians of Red Cedar Lake."

I put my hand into the cavity once more, to be sure that I had got all the relics, and Shobonier said, "yes, all," and began to gather and stow every thing into my capacious overcoat pockets, expecting me of course to return to my home, but I answered, "Chein, marchee keen wigwam"—No. I will go to your wigwam.

"Ko-e-nuckee, ko-e-nuckee, wyonet."—Yes, yes, good.

We found the wigwam well filled with the elder portion of the village, male and female, holding a sort of solemn meeting to talk over the great event of the day, the giving up of the sacred trust they had held so long, awaiting the coming of the beautiful white squaw to claim these papers which Atwater had assured them were of inestimable value to her, but good for nothing to any one else. It was he who had contrived the safe place of deposit, which he worked at many a long day, aided frequently by his adopted mother, who used to paddle him across the lake for this purpose, and it was she, probably, who finally sealed up the *cache*. Old Shobonier's wife was her daughter, who had married him, notwithstanding he had killed her sister.

In glancing over the pages of the diary I noticed an entry which looked as though it might have been written with a burned stick, and it was that which attracted my attention, where I read—"Two dreadful weeks. Leg amputated below the knee by a Frenchman they call By-e. It was not painful. Feel better now. Wound in my side painful. Indian's kindness beyond my comprehension."

We entered the wigwam and sat down in silence. Shobonier filled his pipe and I did the same, and we soon filled the wigwam with a haze that seemed to add to the general gloom. I took out all the things from my pocket and spread them upon a blanket on the ground between Shobonier and wife and myself, and she brought out the ring, pressed it to her lips and moaned, as she added it to the pile before us. Not a word had yet been spoken, and no Quaker meeting was ever more solemnly impressive.

At length, when the wigwam was at its fullest, Shobonier touched my pipe with his and we both knocked out the ashes in a little pile, mixed together upon the ground. Then he looked up at the smoke ascending through the opening at the top of the wigwam, and spoke:

"So fades the red man away. A little while ago the whole country was as full of my people as my wigwam is of smoke. Where are they? Where is the smoke? See all that remains."

And he pointed to the little heap of ashes on the ground between us, and was silent. I felt a tear stealing down my cheek, and I saw others upon the bronzed cheeks of several of those near me. Shobonier continued,

"The old cedar is dead. It will stand a little while, and then some white man will come and burn it. I shall not be here then. I was afraid their sharp eyes would see the hole in the rock and take away the good white man's papers. If all were like him, the white men and red men would mix together like the smoke or the ashes. But the bad white men won't let us live here. They want our land and drive us away. I am ready now to go. I did hope to stay, until the white squaw came with the ring, but I give up all to you. Keep them safe, and if ever she comes give them to her, and tell her the red men, although they go to war, and fight to save their homes and their graves, have hearts. Sabaqua brought the wounded man to his wigwam and his wife nursed him like a child She had taken him to be her son. Tell his squaw that the white man died with good words for her, as he talked to the Great Manito. If I could have lived to see and give her these papers I should then be ready to go where my white brother has gone."

"You shall," I said, "you shall see her, and give her these things with your own hands, and she shall bless you with her own soft voice."

"Oh, say that again!" said Shobonier's wife. "Do not speak with a false tongue. But say that is true, and we shall be happy."

"It cannot be," said Shobonier. "The snow owl came and sat on the old cedar three days ago, and spoke to me three times. I listened. Then I said no, I can not wait. He told me I must wait until he come back three times, before the white fawn would come."

"My friends ears are getting old. He does not hear as well as he did when the white man, who brought these things, first came to his wigwam. The owl said three days, not three more Winters. The owl spoke the truth. My friend did not understand. It is to-day that she is to come. Keep still and I will go out and listen. Perhaps I shall hear the white owl again. I will see if he is not waiting upon the old cedar. I will speak to my Manito alone.

I knew their minds were getting well wrought up. I went out and listened. I heard the wagon. Then it stopped in the hollow where I had directed. I tied my white handkerchief to a stick and placed it upon the wigwam as a signal to Mike that I was ready. Then I returned and took my seat again and began to fill both of our pipes. Shobonier said:

"What says the white man's Manito?"

"That he is also the good Manito of the red men. That he loves all his children. That he will be kind to you and bless the sight of your old eyes before you go away forever from this lake, because you were good to your white brother and made his grave is a pleasant spot. I saw the owl too. It is on the old cedar. His head is turned this way and he flapped his wings, which I interpreted to say, 'look! the white fawn is coming.' Then I came to tell you, and that she will be here before the smoke blows away, after these pipes are burned out. Let us be silent that she may not fear to come. You will know her for she has the ring upon her finger. Look sharp for it."

While we smoked, the old squaw took up the ring and began rubbing it in a manner that made me think of the story of 'the genie of the ring,' in Aladin of the Arabian Knights. Then she commenced a chant, so monotonous and low that it hardly broke the spell of the silence, though the others all joined. I thought: if magic incantations ever produced an effect; they will now. We had finished our smoking and again knocked out the ashes, and the smoke was rapidly fading away. At length Shobonier spoke.

"It is almost gone and she comes not."

I heard at that moment Mike's low whistle and knew that all was ready. I replied to him quickly,

"Yes. She is here. Look!"

At that moment I gave the blanket that closed the entrance to the wigwam a violent pull, and it fell to the ground. Every eye turned that way as I did mine at the word "look," and there, right before the entrance, stood the long expected "white fawn"—white indeed, for I had asked her to array herself as much as possible in white, even to a new white blanket for a shawl. Mike had done his part well in arranging the attitude. On her left stood Weston, upon whose shoulder Indiana rested one hand. Her right was supported by Scott, who stood with his head uncovered and white locks flowing in the wind. The tableau was very impressive. It would have been upon minds less rude than the Indians. The ring upon Indiana's right hand was also conspicuous. Her attitude, form, and face were extremely graceful—*spirituelle*—and highly calculated to strike those who saw her with amazement. The chant ceased as the curtain fell. Every word and loud breath was hushed. The silence was profound. At length I said:

"See! my friends I spoke the truth. She is here. The ring is upon her hand. By that you know where she comes from. This is not the wife of him who sleeps yonder—it is his child. Her mother is getting old and could not make the long journey. She has sent her daughter. But she brings the ring. That is enough. Look at that old man. He is the girl's new father. Do you remember him, Shobonier? You saw him at Vincennes. You fought him at Tippecanoe."

"Yes, yes, he is a great brave. He asked me many questions. I had seen him before, near Chillicothe. He inquired much after a white maiden. She was the daughter of Mewonitoc.

"True. He was her betrothed. I have given him the ring and the portrait and the lock of the White Swan's hair that you preserved."

"Merciful Father!" exclaimed Scott, "is this also Meltonewah, as well as Shobonier and Chevalier? Let me take him by the hand, and ask God to bless his few remaining years. My daughter, greet your friends."

She needed no prompting. She only waited the end of the solemn scene. Then she shook the old man's hand and bathed it with tears, and then fell upon the neck of the old squaw, sobbing like a child. In the mean time a young squaw had got around to where Weston was standing, and greeted him with "bon jour, nic-on," as an old friend. It was his Tippecanoe acquaintance. Shobonier and several others now recognized him, and he came in for a full share of the congratulations, as they all comprehended in a moment that he had been the instrument of this happy meeting. I told my friends in a few words what treasures I had exhumed from their curious place of deposit that morning, and the old squaw had the extreme satisfaction of counting them one after another into the hands of Indiana, whose smiles and thanks were ample satisfaction. Scott tried his best to give silver dollars or gold in reward, but every offer met with a decided "choin." A few coins with holes in them he persuaded some of the younger squaws to accept as gifts, not as rewards.

I looked about for Mike. I found the poor fellow rubbing his eyes with his blanket and trying his best to play the stoic, but it was of no use; human nature under a rough exterior was there and would break out in spite of all he could do to keep it back. At length he choked down something that seemed to get up in his throat, and said:

"Fact is, squire, I have been pretty much of an Indian hater, but I shall always like them better after this. It does beat all natur. I thought that business last night, up to your house was great, but this has fairly hit me center. I own beat. You are ahead of my time. Splendid girl, ain't she, squire? never saw her match any where in my travels. I should kinder like to see that girl hitched up, for he is about as good-lookin' as she. I think I could go then."

I now proposed to all the company, red and white, to cross the lake and look at the grave of Indiana's father. It had been her intention to have his bones removed, but on seeing what a beautiful spot they now rested in, knowing that it was her father's own choice, and that it was probable the place would be adopted as a neighborhood burying-ground, she readily concluded to let them remain, and Sctt then proposed to have the remains of Me-won-i-toc and his daughter brought and laid by the side of Atwater's. Indiana expressed her deep obligations to the Indians for their care of the grave, and then all seemed about ready to depart, after having shed a last tear for the dead, and given a parting salutation to the living, whom few of us would ever see again, for like the dissolving smoke "so fades the red man away."

Suddenly a thought came into my mind, and I spoke, addressing myself particularly to Indiana.

"You have manifested a pure Christian spirit toward these people. It was by the hand of this man that your father fell. You have not only forgiven him, but you have invoked God's blessing upon him and his, even to the third and fourth generation. You have acted upon the principle that pervades all civilized nations—to forgive and forget the acts of war after peace is made. Wounded in battle, your father fell into the hands of these people as a prisoner, and was treated, not as savages frequently treat prisoners, but as all Christian people do, with kindness. You have offered to reward them for that kindness, and for the honor shown his body in placing it here in the lovely spot he had chosen as his sepulchre. The papers and relics which they have so religiously preserved, are worth, you say, untold sums to you, for which you would give gold and silver with a liberal hand. That, these people will not accept. They are actuated by different principles—principles which govern all who cherish honor, uprightness, Christianity. The elder branches of this family, still feel the influence of the teachings of good missionaries. With money you cannot reward them for what they feel as an act of religious duty. Your visit at this auspicious moment has given them more pleasure than it is in your power to conceive. There is one thing more that you can do to increase that pleasure—to yield them greater satisfaction than a hat full of dollars—the sum once refused for that ring. It is something that will furnish them a theme for many a fire-side story.

Mike shall interpret what I have said, and also a few words in which I will explain your relation to Mr. Weston—a man whom I am sure you love—one whom I believe worthy of your love.

"Then, here at your father's grave, so long sought, which you have so fervently prayed that you might find—here, surrounded by these red children of a common Father, with His and your father's spirits to witness, I ask you to be united in marriage with the man of your choice."

"Pray," said Scott, "have you the legal authority to perform the marriage ceremony?"

"Yes, I have in full. I am a magistrate, and I dispatched a messenger early this morning to have a license issued, which we shall find at my house, where I had intended to make my proposition to-night, but I should like to please these people."

"So should I. What say my children?"

"We are both agreed, sir."

Then briefly explaining the situation of affairs, Mike gave the Indians a pretty free translation of my talk. It was perfectly evident before he concluded, when they gave their peculiar shout of approval, that I had not over-estimated their gratification.

As the echoes of their "how! how! how!" reverberated from the woods upon the western shore of the lake, they began to form a ring around where we stood, as though they had been accustomed to similar ceremonies at such a solemn place.

Indiana was standing upon one side, and Weston on the other.

Thus, in the act of joining hands, they figuratively embraced the body of her father. This incident seemed to give great satisfaction to the Indians. I learned afterward that it was one of their own ancient customs, which this appeared to honor.

Then I called upon Scott to invoke a blessing upon this singular meeting and union. Kneeling upon the mound, he poured out a few words to the "Great Spirit," of white men and red, wonderfully solemn and appropriate to the time, place, and circumstances.

These, as well as the marriage ceremony, were explained to the Indians, so as to be fully comprehended.

In all my official celebrations of the marriage rite, I have endeavored to make it solemnly impressive. To do so in the present case required no words of mine. All the surroundings uttered a language never spoken like this by man. No description in words nor in colors of the artist could do justice to the scene.

The snow-clad ground and trees—the gnarly oaks and cedars—the group of human beings, savage and civilized, standing around the lone grave in that grove of evergreen bushes, upon a promontory, jutting out into a frozen lake, across which the smoke of the wigwams was seen in blue curls among the great forest trees. Beyond these the grand prairie stretched away illimitably. Over all, the noonday sun shone with that remarkable effulgence often noticed in early Winter upon the great prairies, or around the northern lakes.

Has God e'er made a brighter scene?
  Has man in broader temple pray'd?
Has mortal union ever been
  On earth in grander temple made?

Did the spirit of a father ever look down upon a more fitting, or more holy union of a daughter to the man of her choice?

Were the words which united a couple in the bonds of matrimony, ever greeted by the witnesses with more satisfaction?

Reader, have you ever seen a more fitting spot to end a long story of frontier life, or a better place to close my history of Me-won-i-toc and its adjuncts.

THE END.

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